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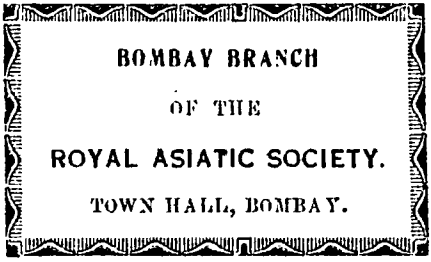

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In Bohemia

with

Du Maurier

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By

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With 63 Original Drawings

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By

G. DU MAURIER

Illustrating the Artist's Life in the Fifties

LONDON
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The few introductory words to this volume were written, and the last proofs posted, shortly before the fatal news overtook me in lovely Venice. My world, resplendent with sunshine, was suddenly lost in darkness. The most lovable of men, whose presence alone sufficed to make life worth living to all those near and dear to him, was gone from amongst us. His hand was no longer to hold those pens—the finely-pointed one that drew, the freely-flowing one that wrote. His well-earned rest was not to be enjoyed on earth.

Now that all is changed, the joyous note of these pages jars upon me. How differently would I attune the story of our student days, were I to write it to-day in loving memory of my friend!

But as it stands, so it must go forth. The book, cordially endorsed by him, is printed and all but issued; he would not let me recall it, I know. He himself, in his kindly, simple way, had enjoyed my resuscitation of our early recollections, and had here ana there lent a helpful hand even to the correcting of the proofs.

To write of him and of his qualities of heart and mind as I would now venture to record them, I must wait till the heavier clouds have cleared away and left the picture, I would draw once more to stand out brightly in the background of Time.

FELIX MOSCHELES.

October, 1896.

N BOHEMIA WITH DU MAURIER

PREFACE.

"YOU'LL see that I've used up all your Mesmerism and a trifle more in my new book," said du Maurier to me, some time before he published his "Trilby"; and that remark started us talking of the good old times in Antwerp, and overhauling the numerous drawings and sketches in which he so vividly depicted the incidents of our Bohemian days. It seemed to me that some of those drawings should be published, if only to show how my now so popular friend commenced his artistic career. In order that they should not go forth without explanation, I wrote the following pages.

The Bohemia I have sought to coerce into book shape, is not the wild country, peopled by the delightfully unconventional savages, so often described; but a little cultivated corner of the land, as I found it in Antwerp, a mere background to the incidents I had to relate. Such

as it is, it may perhaps serve here and there to point to the original soil from which were eventually to spring some of the figures so familiar to us to-day.

To me it was a source of enjoyment to evoke these memories, and if I publish them, it is because I strongly feel that pleasures shared are pleasures doubled. Sociably inclined as I always was, I am truly glad to have the opportunity of giving a hearty welcome to those who may care to join my friend and myself in our ramblings and our "tumblings."

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I.

"TUMBLINGS"

WITH DU MAURIER AND FRIENDS.

"I WELL remember" my first meeting with du Maurier in the class-rooms of the famous Antwerp Academy.

I was painting and blagueing, as one paints and blagues in the storm and stress period of one's artistic development.

It had been my good fortune to commence my studies in Paris; it was there, in the atelier Gleyre, I had cultivated, I think I may say, very successfully, the essentially French art of chaffing, known by the name of "La blague parisienne," and I now was able to give my less lively Flemish friends and fellow-students the full benefit of my experience. Many pleasant recollections bound me to Paris; so, when I heard one day that a "Nouveau" had arrived, straight from my old

atelier Gleyre, I was not a little impatient to make his acquaintance.

The new-comer was du Maurier. I sought him out, and, taking it for granted that he was a Frenchman, I addressed him in French; we were soon engaged in lively conversation, asking

THE ATELIER GLEYRE.

and answering questions about the comrades in Paris, and sorting the threads that associated us both with the same place. "Did you know 'un nommé Pointer'?" he asked, exquisitely Frenchyfying the name for my benefit. I mentally trans-

lated this into equally exquisite English, my version naturally being: "A man called Poynter."

Later on an American came up, with whom I exchanged a few words in his and my native tongue. "What the D. are you—English?" broke in du Maurier. "And what the D. are you?" I rejoined. I forget whether D. stood for Dickens or for the other one; probably it was the latter. At any rate, whether more or less emphatic in our utterances, we then and there made friends on a sound international basis.

It seemed to me that at this our first meeting du Maurier took me in at a glance—the eager, hungry glance of the caricaturist. He seemed struck with my appearance, as well he might be. I wore a workman's blouse that had gradually taken its colour from its surroundings. To protect myself from the indiscretions of my comrades I had painted various warnings on my back, as, for instance, "Bill stickers beware," "It is forbidden to shoot rubbish here," and the like. My very black hair, ever inclined to run riot, was encircled by a craftily conceived band of crochet-work, such as only a fond mother's hand could devise, and I was doubtless colouring some meerschaum of eccentric design. My

fellow-student, the now famous Matthew Maris, immortalised that blouse and that piece of

MY BLOUSE.
(*From an oil-sketch by Matthew Maris.*)

crochet-work in the admirable oil-sketch here reproduced.

It has always been a source of legitimate pride to me to think that I should have been the tool selected by Providence to sharpen du Maurier's pencil; there must have been something in my "Verfluchte Physiognomie," as a very handsome young German, whom I used to chaff unmercifully, called it, to reveal to du Maurier hidden possibilities and to awaken in him those dormant capacities which had betrayed themselves in the eager glance above named.

This was, I believe, in 1857; not feeling over sure as regards that date, I refer to a bundle of du Maurier's letters before me, but they offer me no assistance; there is but one dated, and that one merely headed: "Dusseldorf, 19th Cent." Well, in 1857, then, let us take it, the Antwerp Academy was under the direction of De Keyser, that most urbane of men and painters. Van Lerius, well known to many American and English lovers of art, her Majesty included, was professor of the Painting Class, and amongst the students there were many who rapidly made themselves a name, as Tadema, M. Maris, Neuhuys, Heyermans, and the armless artist, whose foot-painted copies after the Masters at the Antwerp Gallery are well known to every

tourist. The teaching was of a sound, practical nature, strongly imbued with the tendencies of the colourist school. Antwerp ever sought to uphold the traditions of a great Past; in the atelier Gleyre you might have studied form and learnt to fill it with colour, but here you would be taught to manipulate colour, and to limit it by form. A peculiar kind of artistic kicks and cuffs were administered to the student by Van Lerius as he went his rounds. "That is a charming bit of colour you have painted in that forehead," he said to me on one occasion—"so delicate and refined. Do it again," he added, as he took up my palette knife and scraped off the "delicate bit." "Ah, you see, *savez vous*, you can't do it again; you got it by fluke, some stray tints off your palette, *savez vous*," and, taking the biggest brush I had, he swept over that palette and produced enough of the desired tints to have covered a dozen foreheads.

The comrade without arms was a most assiduous worker; it was amusing to watch his mittened feet step out of their shoes and at the shortest notice proceed to do duty as hands; his nimble toes would screw and unscrew the tops of the colour tubes or handle the brush as steadily

as the best and deftest of fingers could have done. Very much unlike any of us, he was most punctilious in the care he bestowed on his paint box, as also on his personal appearance. Maris, Neuhuys, Heyermans, and one or two others equally gifted, but whose thread of life was soon to be cut short, were painting splendid studies, some of which I was fortunate enough to rescue from destruction and have happily preserved.

Quite worthy to be placed next to these are Van-der-something's studies. That (or something like that) was the name of a wiry, active little man who in those days painted in a garret; there everything was disarranged chaotically, mostly on the floor, for there was no furniture that I can recollect beyond a stool, an easel, and a fine old looking-glass. He had a house, though, and a wife, in marked contrast with his appearance and the garret. The house was not badly appointed, and she was lavishly endowed with an exuberance of charms and graces characteristic of a Rubens model.

A fellow-student of mine was their lodger, a handsome young German, brimful of talent, but sadly deficient in health. He had always held

most rigid principles on questions of morality, but unfortunately they failed one day in their application, owing to the less settled views entertained by Madame Van-der-something on such subjects. She certainly gave him much affection on the one hand, but on the other she so audaciously appropriated those of his goods and chattels that could be turned into money, that the police had to intervene, and she eventually found herself before a judge and jury. There, however, she managed so well to cast all responsibility on her husband, who, to this day, I believe was quite innocent, that—"cherchez la femme"—she got off, and he was sentenced to a term of imprisonment.

Now if Van Ostade or Teniers had risen to prosecute him for forging their signatures, and he had been found guilty and condemned to severe punishment, it would have served him right. He was a perfect gem of a forger. He picked up a stock of those dirty old pictures painted on worm-eaten panels that used to abound in the sale-rooms of Antwerp. On these he would paint what might be called replicas with variations, cribbing left and right from old mildewed prints that were scattered all about the floor. He would

scrape and scumble, brighten and deaden with oils and varnishes; he would dodge and manipulate till his picture, after a given time spent in a damp cellar, would emerge as a genuine old master. I once asked a dealer whom I knew to be a regular customer of his, at what price he sold one of those productions. "I really can't say," he answered; "I only do wholesale business. I buy for exportation to England and America." If any of my friends here or over there possess some work of Van-der-something's, I sincerely congratulate them, for the little man was a genius in his way.

Of my friend the German I have only to say that, poor fellow, he spent but a short life of pleasure and of pain. What became of his Circe I never sought to know. It was a clear case of "Ne cherchez pas la femme!"

The first friend I made on my arrival in Antwerp was Jean Heyermans (detto il Pegghi), and a very useful one he proved himself, for he at once took me in hand, helped me to find home and hearth, and generally gave me the correct tip, so valuable to the stranger. He lost no time in teaching me some of those full-flavoured Flemish idioms which from the first enabled me

to emphasise my meaning when I wished to express it in unmistakable language.

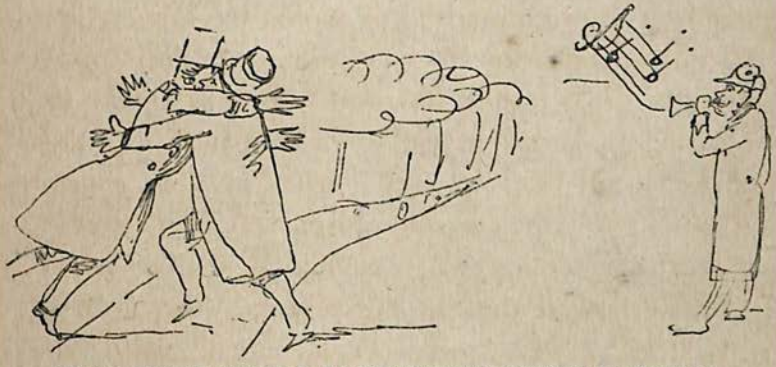
He himself was a remarkable linguist, speaking English, French, and German fluently, in addition to his native language, Dutch; so he soon chummed with du Maurier and me in several languages, and became one of our set. He was always ready to follow us in our digressions from the conventional course, and we felt that many of our best international jokes would have been lost had it not been for his comprehension and appreciation. His father, too, was a kind friend to us, inviting us to his house to hear Music and talk Art, to ply knives and forks, and to empty glasses of various dimensions. That gentleman's corpulence had reached a degree which clearly showed that he must have "lost sight of his knees" some years back, but he was none the less strong and active. There were two daughters, one pathetically blind, the other sympathetically musical.

How our friend came by the name of Peggy none of us know, but he figures as such in many of du Maurier's drawings.

"If Peggy," he says, in a letter from Malines, "doesn't come on Sunday, may the vengeance of

the gods overtake him! Tell him so. I'll meet him at the train." And then he sketches the meeting and greeting of the two, and the railway guard starting his train with the old-fashioned horn-signal on the G.E.C. then in use.

My friend Jean soon started on his career as a regular exhibitor in Belgium and Holland, besides which he developed a remarkable taste and talent for teaching.



PEGGY AND DU MAURIER AT THE RAILWAY STATION IN MALINES.

"What would you advise about Pen's studies?" said Robert Browning one afternoon as we sat in my little studio, talking about his son's talents and prospects. (This was a few years after my final return to England.) "Send him to Antwerp," I said, "to Heyermans; he is the best man I know of to start him."

Pen went, and soon made surprising progress, painting a picture after little more than a twelve-month that at once found an eager purchaser. The poet took great pride in his son's success, and lost no opportunity of speaking in the most grateful and appreciative terms of the teacher. Millais and Tadema endorsed his praise, and Heyermans' reputation was established. A few years ago he migrated to London, where he continues his work, pluckily upholding the traditions of the Past, whilst readily encouraging the wholesome aspirations of a rising generation.

Another man destined to find a permanent home in England was Alma Tadema. He was not much in the Painting Class in my time, but had previously been hard at work there. I mostly saw him in the room adjoining it, and he always seemed to me exclusively interested in the study of costume and history. The incident that led to his leaving the academy rather abruptly is characteristic. An uncle of his having given him a commission for a picture, Tadema applied to de Keyser for authorisation to make the necessary break in his studies. The Director accorded him three weeks, but, as Tadema put it when lately recalling the circumstance, "I couldn't

paint a picture in three weeks then, and I cannot now."

I little thought that from his studies of costume and history, the comrade of my Antwerp days would evolve a long and uninterrupted series of masterpieces, resuscitating the Past and presenting it with the erudition of the Student and the genius of the Artist. Nor did anything foreshadow that my genial Dutch friend, to whom the English language was a dead letter, was destined in a not too distant Future to become a shining light of England's Royal Academy.

Du Maurier was soon installed in the Painting Class, and made a vigorous start. Of the things he painted, I particularly recollect a life-size, three-quarter group of an old woman and a boy—a pen-and-ink drawing of which is in my father's album—that showed talent enough and to spare, but his artistic aspirations were soon to meet with a serious check. His eyesight suddenly gave him trouble, and before long put a stop to his studies at atelier or academy. He was not to become a painter, as he had fondly hoped, but as we now know, he was to work out his destiny in another direction. With the simplest of means he was to delineate

From du Maurier's painting.

character, and everyday drops of ink, when filtered through his pen, were to emerge in quaint or graceful shapes, wit, satire, and sentiment taking their turns to prompt and guide that pen.

In those days we called all that caricaturing, and caricature he certainly did; mainly me and himself. From the first he imagined he saw a marked contrast between us. His nose was supposed to be turned up, and mine down, whereas really neither his nor mine much deviated from the ordinary run of noses; my lower lip certainly does project, but his does not particularly recede, and so on. But the imaginary contrast inspired him in the earliest days of our acquaintance, and started him on the war-path of pen-and-inking. He drew us in all conceivable and in some inconceivable situations. "Moscheles and I," he says on one page, "had we not been artists, or had we been artistically beautiful; then again, if we were of the fair sex, or soldiers, or, by way of showing our versatility, if we were horses." In that page he seems to have focussed the essence of our characteristics, whilst appearing only to delineate our human and equine possibilities. Poor F.,

one of our German friends, fares badly, a donkey's head portraying him "s'il était cheval."

MOSCHELES ET MOI SI NOUS AVIONS ÉTÉ DU BEAU SEXE.

SI NOUS AVIONS ÉTÉ BEAUX.

In consequence of the growing trouble with his eyes, du Maurier left Antwerp for Malines,

to place himself under the care of an eminent oculist who resided within easy reach of that

MOSCHELES ET MOI SI NOUS N'AVIONS PAS ÉTÉ ARTISTES.

SI NOUS AVIONS ÉTE CHEVAUX. F. S'IL ÉTAIT CHEVAL.

city. That blessed blister—"ce sacré vésicatoire," as he calls it, is one of the doctor's remedies.

The sketch shows how it is being applied by a devoted Sister of Mercy.

In those days railway travelling was not as rapid as it is now, but one could get from

SI NOUS AVIONS ÉTÉ MILITAIRES.

Antwerp to Malines in about an hour, a circumstance which I frequently turned to account. Du Maurier's mother had come to live with him, his sister joining them for a short time, and the home in quiet old Malines soon became a sort

of haven of rest. I spent many a happy day and night there, on which occasions I am bound to say that the piano, requisitioned by me for

"CE SACRÉ VÉSICATOIRE."

some special purposes of musical caricature, detracted somewhat from the restfulness of the haven. However that may have been, such intrusion was never resented; my Swedish prima donna, or my qualifications as a basso profondo, or a brass-bandsman, were always treated with the greatest indulgence by the ladies, and my high soprano flourished and

ISABEL DU MAURIER.

positively reached unknown altitudes under the beneficent sunshine of their applause. (For all that I never attempted Chopin's "Impromptu.")

Then du Maurier would sing the French "romance" or the English song, or he would "dire la chansonnette," and what with his sympathetic tenor and his intuitive knowledge of music, he seemed to be able to express more than many who had had the advantage of a musical training. A few old letters of his remind me that we were audacious enough to write verses and music, he doing the former, I the latter.

"Here's something I particularly want you to do," he writes. "Take strong coffee, inspire yourself, think of your 'Ideal,' and compose some very pretty music to the enclosed words, with which Rag's ideal flame has inspired Rag —*surtout*, let it be as good as possible, with accompaniment *à l'avenant.* An alteration in the music of each stanza would render the gradation of energy expressed in the words, 'Je compte sur toi.'" (How du Maurier came by the name of "Rag" I must tell later on.)

with du Maurier.

Then follow the words :—

CHANSON.

D'après un barde Britannique.[1]

Les sources vont à la rivière
Et la rivière à l'océan ;
Les monts embrassent la lumière,
Le vent du ciel se mêle au vent ;
Contre le flot, le flot se presse ;
Rien ne vit seul—tout semble, ici,
Se fondre en la commune ivresse. . . .
Et pourquoi pas nous deux aussi ?
Vois le soleil étreint la terre,
Qui rougit d'aise à son coucher—
La lune étreint les flots, qu'éclaire
Son rayon doux comme un baiser ;
Les moindres fleurs ont des tendresses
Pour leurs pareilles d'ici-bas
Que valent toutes ces caresses
Si tu ne me caresses pas ? [2]

Two slight sketches of "L'auteur de profil" and "Le compositeur de face" head the page.

Soon afterwards he sends me another poetical effusion and writes :

"DEAR BOBTAIL,—I send you the Serenade

[1] See Shelley's "Love's Philosophy."

[2] Pour bien apprécier la valeur artistique de cette romance, il faut l'entendre chanter par Rag en tenant les yeux fixés sur le profil de Bobtail.

composed 'tant bien que mal' last night, not 'entre la poire et le fromage,' but between the tea and the pears. I am afraid you will not find it as dramatic as you wished; but I don't feel it otherwise, and as Mahomet can't write words to the mountain's music, the mountain must try and adapt its music to the verses of Mahomet.

"SÉRÉNADE APRÈS LA SIESTE.

" Berthe aux grands yeux d'azur, ouvre donc ta paupière,
Chasse les rêves d'or de ton léger sommeil—
Ils sont là, nos amis ; cède à notre prière
Le trône préparé n'attend que ton réveil ;
Le soleil a cessé de régner sur la terre,
Viens régner sur la fête et sois notre soleil.
Réponds à nos accords par tes accents plus doux
Au jardin des amours, viens ô viens avec nous.

Au jardin des amours ta place est réservée,
Parmi des feux de joie et des lilas en fleurs.
Viens réveiller en nous de nouvelles ardeurs—
Descends avec la nuit, ainsi que la rosée—
Tant que l'astre d'argent sourit à la vallée,
Toi, bel astre d'amour, viens sourire à nos cœurs !
Réponds à nos accords par tes accents plus doux,
Au jardin des amours, Berthe, viens avec nous.

Viens avec ta couronne, et viens avec ta lyre,
Tes chants pour nos amis, tes doux regards pour moi !
Déjà j'entends les jeux de la foule en émoi
Sur des gazons fleuris . . . oh le joyeux délire !
Si tu ne descends pas, helas ! on pourra dire :

'Berthe aux grands yeux d'azur, on a chanté sans toi!'
Réponds à nos accords par tes accents plus doux,
Berthe aux grands yeux d'azur, viens ô viens avec nous!

"You see I have indulged in poetic license; for instance, the first tenor says he hears the folks doing the light fantastic toe. One might suppose they danced in sabots—mere poetic license, and besides, a first tenor ought to have very good ears. . . . So now, my lad, inspire yourself."

What the result of his appeal to my inspiration may have been, I do not remember, but I find this is what he writes on the subject—

"CARISSIMO,—In vain have I taxed Rag's inventive powers to alter the last stanza; we must e'en stick to 'Ce baiser-la.' The lines I have underlined mean that I don't quite approve the part of the music that comes just there, as in the musical phrase you have set to it I fancy there is a want of tenderness. All the rest is stunning; the more I hums it the more I likes it, but I can't exactly come your accompaniment."

No wonder, for my accompaniments were usually rather indefinite quantities, subject to

the mood of the moment. "Moscheles or Mephistopheles, which?" he asks, as he depicts me at the piano, perhaps evolving some such accompaniment from the depths of "untrained inner consciousness." "Eureka" he might have

Moscheles, or Mephistopheles? which

put under that other sketch, where his own hands have at last found some long-sought harmony or chord on the piano. Another drawing there is of a somewhat later period which he calls "Inspiration papillotique." Again I am at the piano,

"INSPIRATION PAPILLOTIQUE."

my eyes raised to the "She" in papillottes, who floats as a vision in the clouds, issuing from my ever-puffing cigar, whilst at my feet is stretched the meditative form of my friend, and under them is crushed some work of our immortal colleague Beethoven.

DU MAURIER IMPROVISING.

And who was "She" thus to inspire us? On the supposition that most people are, like myself, interested in the "Shes" that can inspire, I may permit myself to say something about the attractive young lady who was able to lead us by easy stages from the vague "inspiration papillotique

to an admiration which might be said to culminate in flirtation. I don't remember either of us ever trying to cut the other out, as the accompanying sketch seems to imply, where "Rag and

HOW RAG TRIES TO DÉSILLUSIONER CARRY ON BOBTAIL, AND BOBTAIL TRIES TO DITTO DITTO ON RAG.

Bobtail fight a duel for Carry, using their noses as double-barrelled pistols. Shows the way in which Rag tries to *désillusioñer* Carry on Bobtail, and in which Bobtail tries to ditto ditto on Rag

Carry being on this side of the rivals is not represented."

The truth of the matter is that we shared fraternally in the enjoyment of her good graces, he having the pull of me the greater part of the week, and only suspending operations in my favour when I came to Malines on a Saturday to Monday visit. These occasions were productive of a great number of drawings and sketches, illustrating our little adventures, and all plainly showing that the incidents recorded occurred to us at that pleasant time of life, when bright illusions and buoyant spirits lead the way, and when sorrow itself has more of the rose colour than many a rose of a later day.

Malines was, and perhaps is still, a dull, deserted city, at best up to the date of last century, beating the record for dry-as-dustiness and growing dear little blades of grass between its cobble stones. It boasts of a great many churches and of a very great many more priests. (*Vide:* The ingenious use which Rag makes of Bobtail's pliable hat.) In addition to these attractions, there was, however, a factor of paramount interest to us. Then and there, just as now and elsewhere, there were pretty girls about,

and I need not say that, as both of us were studying art and devoting our best energies to the cult of the beautiful, we considered it our duty to take special notice of these pretty girls wherever we came across them. It is probably the conscientious performance of his duty in that direction which enabled du Maurier to evolve

THE INGENIOUS USE WHICH RAG MAKES OF BOBTAIL'S PLIABLE HAT.

those ever-attractive and sympathetic types of female beauty we are all so familiar with. Nor would it have been becoming in me, who had everything to learn, to lag behind, or to show less ardour in the pursuit of my studies.

Thus, whilst du Maurier's facile pen was throwing off black and white sketches of Miss

Carry, it was reserved for me to paint her portrait in oils. Her real name was Octavie, not Carry; that appellation we had most unceremoniously and unpoetically derived from "Cigar." All else about her we invested, if not with ceremony with a full amount of poetry. And certainly there was a subtle quality in Carry, well worthy of appreciation, a faculty of charming and being charmed, of giving and taking, of free and easiness, coupled with ladylike reserve. She seemed to be born with the intuitive knowledge that there was only one life worth living, that of the Bohemian, and to be at the same time well protected by a pretty reluctance to admit as much. In fact, to give a correct idea of her I need but say her soul was steeped in the very essence of Trilbyism. Having got to Carry's soul, it may not be inappropriate to say something also about her looks; but to describe good looks is, as we all know, deliberately to court failure; far better request every man to conjure up his own type of beauty and he will be sure to be interested in the picture he evolves. That man will be nearest the truth whose young lady has a rich crop of brown curly hair, very blue inquisitive eyes, and a figure of peculiar elasticity.

Octavie L., dite Carry, was the daughter of an organist who had held a good position at one of the principal churches of Malines. When he died he left but a small inheritance to his widow; with what she could realise, she purchased the goodwill of a small tobacconist's store and set up in business. Neither the mother nor the daughter had much previous knowledge of the concern they had started, and they were consequently not very discriminating in the selection of their brands; but what was lacking in connoisseurship was fully made up for by Mrs. L.'s obliging manners and by Octavie's blue eyes. These had been steadily gaining in expression since she first opened them about seventeen years back. Customers soon came in, and for a time the little business was as flourishing as anything could well be in Malines. The average citizen of so ecclesiastically conservative, and hereditarily stationary a city could hardly be expected to encourage a new venture of the kind. Still even there there were some young men about town, a sort of "jeunesse doré," not of 18-carat gold perhaps, but a "jeunesse" quite equal to the pleasant task of buzzing around the fair tobacconist. Mrs. L. did her share of chaperoning; du Maurier and I supplied the rest,

and watched over her with chivalrous, if not quite disinterested devotion. We differed in every respect from the type of the young man of the period above mentioned; so naturally we were bright stars in Carry's firmament; she looked upon us as superior beings, and, granting her points of comparison, not without cause; du Maurier could draw and I could paint; he could

"BESHREW THEE, NOBLE SIR RAGGE! LET US TO THE FAIR TOBACCONISTE!"

sing and I could mesmerise, and couldn't we just both talk beautifully! We neither of us encourage hero-worship now, but then we were "bons princes," and graciously accepted Carry's homage as due to our superior merits.

There are two drawings illustrative of that chivalrous devotion of ours. We are galloping along on our noble steeds, richly attired, as true

knights and good should be when they go to pay homage to beauty.

"Beshrew thee, noble Sir Ragge! let us to the fair tobacconiste!"

"SALUT À LA GENTE ET ACCORTE PUCELLE!"

"Aye! Gentle Sir Bobtaile! By my halidome, she's passing fair."

The second drawing shows our "Salut à la Gente et accorte pucelle!" and the winning smile with which Carry would receive us.

Mesmerism, or, as the fashion of to-day calls it, Hypnotism, formed so frequent a topic of conversation and speculation between du Maurier and myself, that it takes a very prominent place in my recollections.

In Paris I had had opportunities of attending some most interesting séances, in consequence of which I soon proceeded to investigate the mesmeric phenomena on my own account. Now I have not touched the fluid for some thirty years; I swore off because it was taking too much out of me; but I look back with pleasure on my earlier experiments, successes I may say, for I was fortunate enough to come across several exceptional subjects. Du Maurier was particularly interested in one of these, Virginie Marsaudon, and had a way of putting puzzling questions concerning her faculties and my mesmeric influence. Virginie was a "femme de ménage" of the true Parisian type, a devoted elderly creature, a sort of cross between a charwoman and a housekeeper. I was not yet eighteen when I first went to Paris, to study under my cousin, the eminent painter, Henri Lehmann. At his studio I found Virginie installed as the presiding genius of the establishment, using in turn broom or tub, needle, grill or

frying-pan as the occasion might require; the wide range of her powers I further extended by making a truly remarkable mesmeric subject of her. My début in Paris was that of the somewhat bewildered foreigner, speaking but very indifferent French, and she had from the first done what she could to make me feel at home in the strange city, treating me with truly motherly care and devotion. How completely she took possession of me, is shown by a passage in a letter she wrote when I was ill in Leipsic, where I had gone on a visit to my parents. After expressing her anxiety and her regret at not being there to nurse me, she emphatically says:—"Je rends Madame, votre mère, responsable de votre santé" (I make Madame, your mother, responsible for your health). It needed but little to lead her on from a state of docile and genial dependence to one of unconscious mesmeric subjection, and so, a few passes shaping her course, I willed her across the boundary line that separates us from the unknown, a line which, thanks to science, is daily being extended. Madame veuve Marsaudon was herself an incorrigible disbeliever in the phenomena of mesmerism, but as a subject her faculties were such as to surprise and convert many a scoffer.

At the séances, to which I invited my friends and a few scientific outsiders, I always courted the fullest investigation, taking it as the first duty of the mesmerist to show cause why he should not be put down as a charlatan. So we had tests and counter-tests, evidence and counter-evidence; there were doctors to feel the pulse and to scrutinise the rigidity of the muscles, experts to propound scientific ifs and buts, and wiseacres generally to put spokes in the wheel of progress, as is their playful way, wherever they find that wheel in motion. It was doubly satisfactory, then, that the good faith of subject and mesmerist could be conclusively proved.

One of these séances led to a rather amusing incident. One night I was awakened from first slumbers by a sharp ring at my bell, and when, after some parleying, I opened the door, I found myself confronted by two individuals. One I recognised as an "inquirer" who had been brought to my rooms some time previously; the other was a lad I had not seen before. The inquirer, I ascertained, having carefully watched my *modus operandi* on the occasion of his visit, had next tried experiments of his own. In this

instance he had succeeded in mesmerising a lad, but had found it impossible to recall him to his normal condition. So, securing him by a leather strap fastened round his waist, he led him through the streets of Paris to my rooms. There we both tried our powers upon him, the result being very unsatisfactory. The youth, feeling himself freed from one operator and not subjected by the other, refused allegiance to either, and, being of a pugnacious temperament, he squared up and commenced striking out at both of us. It was not without considerable difficulty that I re-mesmerised him completely, and then, having previously prepared his mind to account naturally for his presence in my rooms, I succeeded in awakening him, and all ended happily. The inquirer was duly grateful, the youth went home strapless and none the worse for the adventure, and I proceeded to do some very sound sleeping on my own account.

I would say more of my séances and all the recollections they evoke, were I not impatient to get back to du Maurier and to Malines. Once on the experiences of those days, I have much to relate—pros and cons, if you please, for that subtle magnetic fluid, which, without physical

contact, one human being can transmit to another, is a ticklish one to handle. I cannot pack my pen, though, and take train of thought to the Belgian city without mentioning my friend Allongé, the well-known French artist, then a fellow-student of mine at the Ecole des Beaux Arts. A chance contact of our knees as we sat closely packed with some sixty other students put me on the track of a new subject, perhaps the most interesting one it was ever my good fortune to come across. But of him another time.

Using the privilege of a mesmerist, I elect to will the reader—that is, if natural slumber has not ere this put him beyond my control—across the frontier, into the back parlour of Mrs. L.'s tobacco store. There I am operating on a boy—such a stupid little Flemish boy that no amount of fluid could ever make him clever. How I came to treat him to passes I don't remember; probably I used him as an object-lesson to amuse Carry. All I recollect is that I gave him a key to hold, and made him believe that it was red-hot and burnt his fingers, or that it was a piece of pudding to be eaten presently, thereby making him howl and grin alternately.

In the middle of our séance Carry is called away by a customer, one of the swells of Malines much addicted to a poetical expression of his admiration for the fair sex in general and for Carry in particular. Greatly to our edification, she was pleased to improve the occasion by leading him on, within our hearing, to make what is commonly called a fool of himself. The pleasant incident is recorded in the accompanying sketch.

But mesmerism meant more than incidental amusement or even scientific experiment to us in those Antwerp and Malines days. When one stands on the threshold of a world of mysteries one cannot but long to bridge over the chasm that separates one from the gods, the fairies, or the fiends. To be sure, we should have been glad if we could have got "light, more light" thrown on our steps, but, failing that, we tried to find our way as best we could in the mist. We loved that never-attainable Will-o'-the-Wisp, "Truth," for its own dear Bohemian sake; so, guided by Fancy and Fantasy, we made frequent inroads into the boundless land where unknown forces pick up our poor dear little conception of the Impos-

A MESMERIC SÉANCE IN MRS. L.'S BACK PARLOUR.

sible, and use it as the starting-point of never-to-be-exhausted possibilities.

Such a land was particularly well suited to the state of our outward-bound minds and our excelsior appetites. It was on one or the other of these excursions, I feel confident, that du Maurier was inoculated with the germs that were eventually to develop into Trilbyism and Svengalism. No wonder, then, if in more than one of his letters and sketches the future delineator of those characters embodies bold dreams and fancies, or if on one occasion he depicts himself, with fixed gaze and hair erect, sitting bolt upright on my hospitable sofa, thrilled and overawed by the midnight presence of the uncanny, which I had evoked for his benefit.

"Yes, governor, it's all very well to ask a nervous fellow to Antwerp and amuse him and make him ever so jolly and comfortable—— But why, when the bleak November wind sobs against the lattice and disturbs the dead ashes in the grate, when everything is damned queer and dark, and that sort of thing, you know—why should you make nervous fellows' flesh creep by talk about mesmerism, and dead fellows coming

to see live fellows before dying, and the Lord knows what else? Why, Gad! it's horrid!'

My rooms in Antwerp were the scene of many a festive gathering. We always spoke of them in the plural; it sounded better, but in reality

THE MIDNIGHT PRESENCE OF THE UNCANNY.

there was only one room with two small alcoves. Studies and sketches covered the walls or littered the floor, and the genial figure of a skeleton, in very perfect condition, stood in the corner by the piano. At first it came with a view to instructing

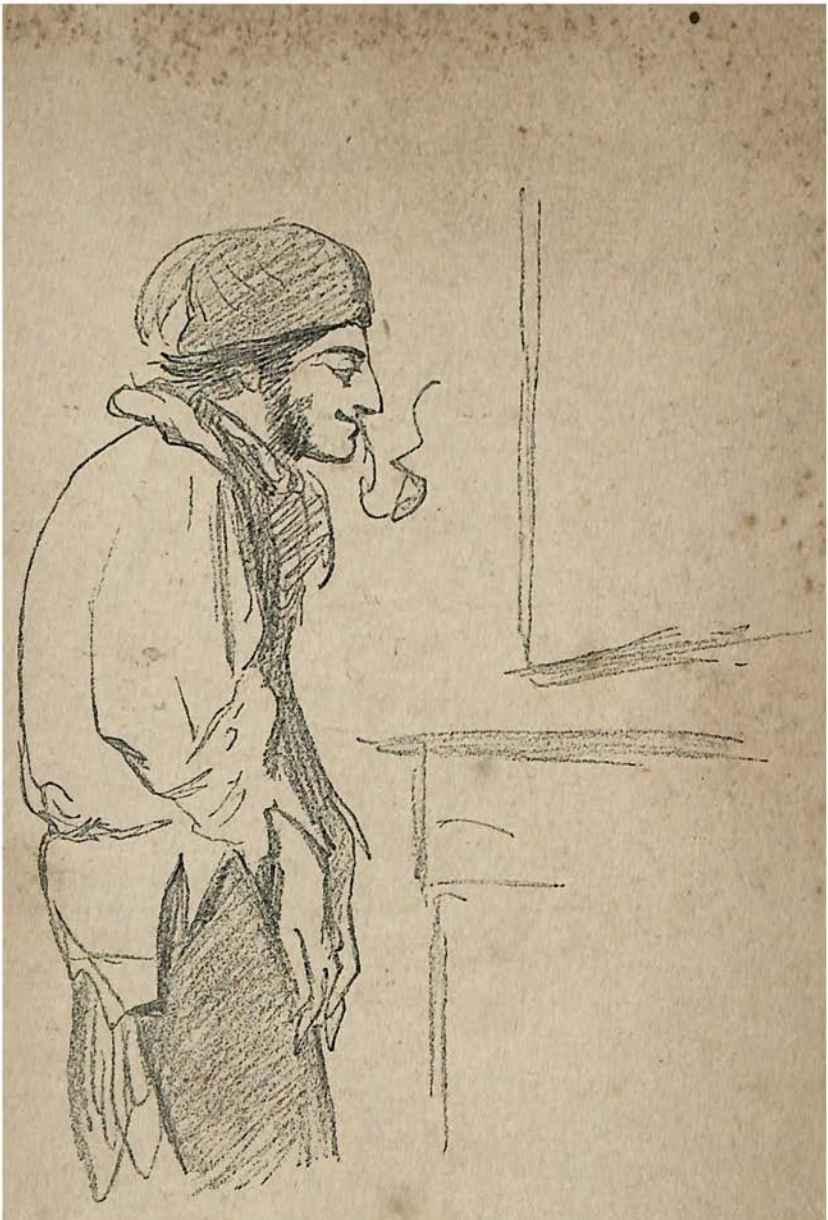
me in the Science of Anatomy, but soon, putting aside any didactic pretensions, my bony professor became quite a companion and friend; it was thus natural that on those occasions when guests had been convened to my rooms, he would take a leading part, generally appearing gracefully draped and appropriately illuminated, and thus forming a fitting background to the gay proceedings of the evening. We had music, recitation, and acting, mostly of an improvised, home-made character. The sounds thereof were not confined, however, to the narrow limits of home, but spread far beyond it, a fact which the neighbours, I am sure, would have been at any time ready most emphatically to attest.

In justice to myself I may say that I was primarily answerable for the magnitude of the sound waves, but I am bound to add that my example was followed and even improved upon by the more lung-gifted of my companions. Amongst the milder forms of entertainment was my impersonation of Rachel. That grand actress I had often seen in Paris, and had, more than once, shivered in my shoes as she annihilated the Tyrant, pouring forth the vials of her wrath and indignation in the classical language of

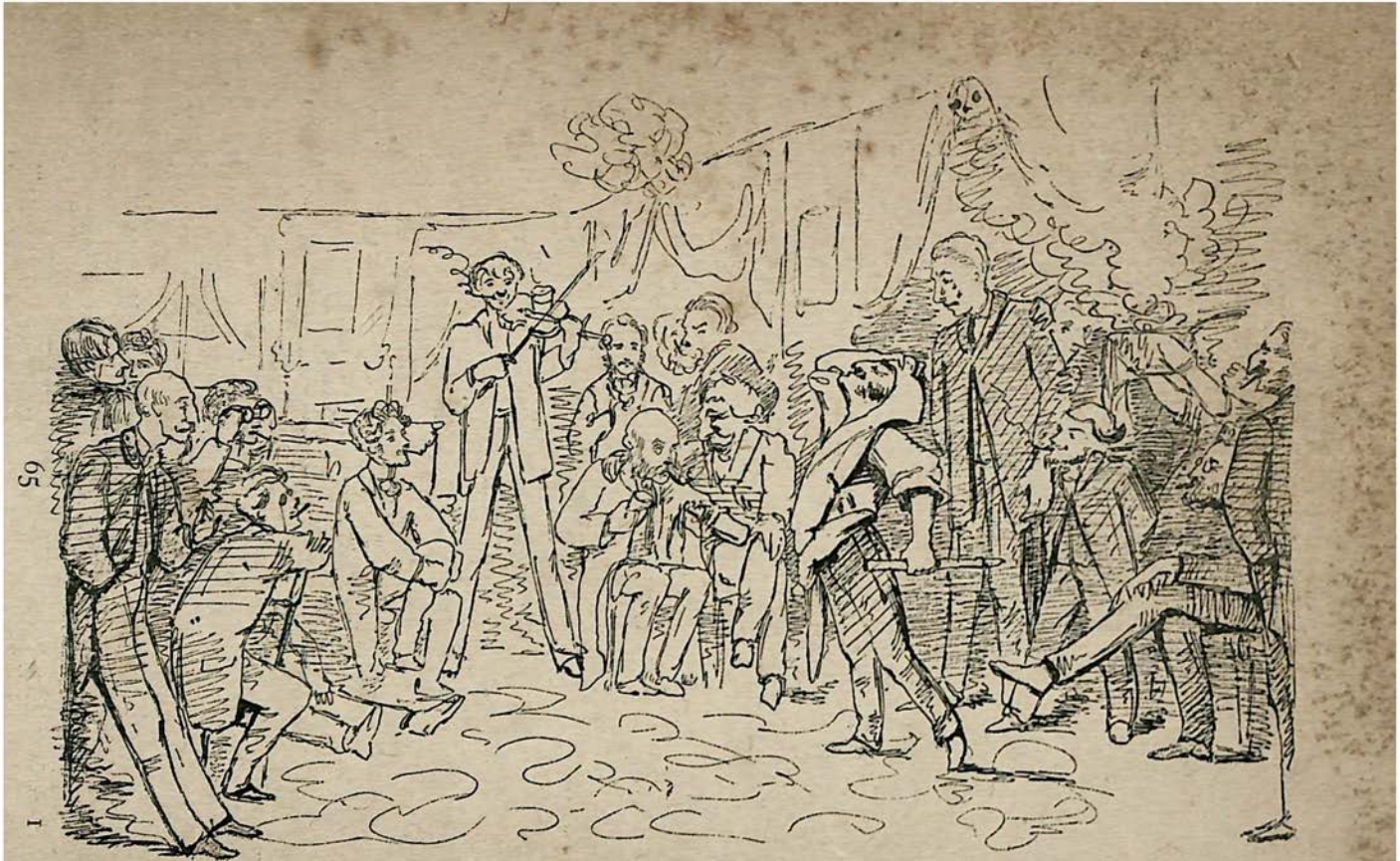
Racine and Corneille. With those accents still ringing in my ears I came to Antwerp, and there, when surrounded by sympathetic friends, the spirit would sometimes move me, and I would feel—excuse the conceit of youth—as if I too could have been a great female Tragedian, had Fate not otherwise disposed of me. In such moments I would seize the blade of the paper-knife, and use the blood of the beet-root, drape myself in the classical folds of the bed-sheet, and go for the Tyrant, hissing fearful hexameters of scorn and vituperation into his ears, and usually winding up with a pose so magnificiently triumphant that it would bring down any house which was not of the most solid construction.

Another time the cushion yonder would be my child—the orthodox long-lost one—"It is!—It is not!—It is!—Let me clasp it to my other cushion!" "Toi mon fils chéri. Ange de mon enfer, douleur de mes loisirs!"

The celebration of one of my birthdays was an event rescued from oblivion by du Maurier's pencil. He illustrates our lively doings on that day and my appearance the next morning. "Felix's mamma," he says, had worked a very



FELIX LOOKS VERY SEEDY AFTER HIS BIRTHDAY.



"RACHEL" AND FRIENDS CELEBRATE BOBTAIL'S BIRTHDAY.

pretty cap for Felix, and Felix had it on the morning after his birthday, and Felix found that though the cap was very pretty, it made him look very seedy."

In the other drawing he gives striking likenesses of the friends assembled to celebrate the festive occasion. They had come together in the evening, much in the same spirit that had led them under my windows in the morning, with a brass band and an enormous bouquet of cabbages, carrots, and cauliflowers. There, on the left, is Van Lerius with his hands in his pockets, next to him du Maurier; then Heyermans, Bource, and all the other chums, and, though last not least, the proud bearer of the steaming punch-bowl. What a set of jolly good fellows! It is quite a pleasure to pore over the sketch and contemplate du Maurier's phiz, expressing his unbounded capacity of enjoyment. I can see him taking points that fell flat with the other fellows. Quite a pleasure, too, to think of Huysmans' big nose and Van Lerius' bald head, of the tall and the short, of spindle shanks and chubby face.

Where are they all now? Some thirty-five years have elapsed, and the whirligig of time has

been revolving with unfailing regularity, dropping us here and there, as caprice dictated, some to stand, some to fall. What has become of the threads of friendship, picked up at the studio or the café, perhaps whilst puzzling over the chess-board, or when harmonising in four-part song? Golden threads; some destined to be spun out and to become solidly intertwined; others to be hopelessly entangled or cruelly snapped asunder by the inexorable Fates. Where shall I find them now, those friends and boon companions of my Bohemian days? Here, there, and everywhere—perhaps nowhere! Some I see trotting briskly along the high-road of life, others dragging wearily through its tangled bypaths. Yet again others resting under a big, cold stone that bears an inscription and a couple of dates, fixed just above their heads.

II.

I WELL remember a certain "barrière" that protected the level crossing just outside the Malines Station. It was but an ordinary piece of hinged timber, but we, that is, du Maurier and I, can never forget it; for, as we stood by its side we vowed that come what might, we would never travel along that line and past the old gate without recalling that summer evening and re-thinking the thoughts of our early days.

It was also there, one evening, that we adopted our never-to-be-forgotten aliases—Rag and Bobtail. We had chanced upon a chum of ours named Sprenk lounging across that old barrière, and some fortuitous circumstance having revealed the fact that his initials were T. A. G., we forthwith dubbed him Tag. Out of that very naturally grew the further development: Rag, Tag, and Bobtail.

T. A. G. was an Englishman, strong and hearty and considerably taller than either of us. That alone would have sufficed to secure him the friendship of du Maurier, who ever worshipped at the shrine of physical greatness. He loved to look up to the man of six-foot-something, or to sit in the shadow of the woman of commanding presence, his appreciation of size culminating in the love of "Chang," that dog of dogs, whom we have all learnt to admire, as we followed his career through the volumes of the immortal Weekly, presided over by Toby and his master.

I somehow associate Tag with whisky and water; not that he took it much or often, but he gave one the impression that whatever others might do when amongst the benighted foreigner, he, for one, would not let a good old English custom drop into disuse. Looking at Tag one intuitively felt that his father before him had taken his moderate glass of W. and W., and that, if he married and had sons, they would do likewise. I do not think that he was particularly fond of art or artists, unless inasmuch as they were brother Bohemians. He was engaged, or, at least, he was generally just about to be

engaged, in some business, and whilst waiting for the opportune moment to commence operations, he would settle down to an expectant present. The golden opportunity he was looking for was plainly visible on his horizon, but it had a way of remaining stationary, and as it was contrary to Tag's nature to move unless under great pressure, the two never met.

In the meanwhile Tag was one of our trio of chums; he was a good deal with us when we were out and about, bent on storming the world, or climbing Parnassus; we did the climbing, he the looking on, the parts thus being distributed to our mutual satisfaction. He was always pleasantly acquiescent, and had the rare gift of making himself useless agreeably; a common bond of interest we had in the Colorado claro and oscuro, whether the fair or dark, applied to the friendly weed or the still more friendly fair sex.

He describes himself pretty correctly in a letter he wrote to us from Paris, when he says:—

"Since my arrival here my notes of what I have to do represent what I have not done, and if it be true that the infernal regions are paved

with good intentions, I shall be received on my arrival by a deputation of souls to thank me for my contribution to the pavement."

There are sketches in which Tag's eloquence

RAG.

BOBTAIL.

is confined to one exclamation, "Matilda!" But whether that name was coupled with present felicity or future hopes I do not recollect. But du Maurier's lines describe him and our chumship

much better than any words of mine could do. He says :—

"To Bobtail.

Oh, fortunatos nimium, sua si bona norint
All lazy beggars like me——"

"In the sunshine of April, the April of life,
You and I and our Tag make three ;
And few will deny that for such close chums
A queer set of fellows are we.

For I walk slowly, and you walk fast,
And Tag lies down (not to fall) ;
You think of the Present, *I* think of the Past,
And Tag thinks of nothing at all.

Yet who shall be lucky, and who shall be rich ?
Whether both, neither, one, or all three ;
Is a mystery which, Dame Fortune, the witch,
Tells neither Tag, Bobtail, or me !

(Rag)."

The portraits of Rag and Bobtail head the page. A space was left for Tag's, but never filled.

Apropos of plans and prospects on Tag's distant horizon, I find a passage in one of his letters, dated November, 1857, which is well worth recording. I quote it to give myself and my fellow Europeans an opportunity of rejoicing

that Tag's scheme belonged to those that were not to be realised. It runs thus:—

"As du Maurier's eye, though better, will, most probably, not allow him to resume his profession as a painter, we have determined to try our fortune together in Australia, and mean to start from here early in February. He hopes to obtain employment by drawing sketches, caricatures, &c., for the Melbourne *Punch*, and other illustrated papers. You know how eminently suited he is for that kind of work, and we hear that an artist of talent of that description is much wanted out there, and would be sure to do exceedingly well. I, of course, do not intend to start in that line, but hope to be able to support myself for the first few years, after which I shall establish myself in business on my own account, and I trust, with luck, I may return home in the course of from ten to fifteen years, if not with immense riches, at all events with enough to enable me to pass the remainder of my 'old age' in peace and comfort."

Did Tag ever go, I wonder? Did he come back, and has he perhaps been enjoying his "old

"WHAT THE DEUCE AM I TO DO WITH THIS CONFOUNDED ROPE? HANG MYSELF, I WONDER."

age" somewhere over here for the last thirty years?—I wish you would say what *has* become of you, my dear Tag. I'm sure we should be chums again, if you're anything like the dear old stick-in-the-mud of former days! Don't you recollect that sketch of Rag's? I had nearly forgotten to mention it, the one with the three ropes of life. I am climbing ahead with fiendish energy. Rag follows, steadily ascending, weighted as he is with a treasure, a box marked "Mrs. Rag, with care," and your noble form is squatting on the floor, a glass of the best blend at your feet, and a cigar you are enjoying from which rises the legend that makes you say, "What the deuce am I to do with this confounded rope? Hang myself, I wonder?" Nonsense, to be sure; but do come and tell me what you *have* done with the rope, or say where I can find you still squatting.

That music of a certain spontaneous kind, the music within us which we were ever longing to bring to the surface, was a bond of union between du Maurier and myself, I have already mentioned; but that bond was to be greatly strengthened by the music that great musicians on more than one occasion lavished on us. First came Louis

Brassin, the pianist. He had studied under Moscheles at the Conservatorio of Leipsic, the city of Bach and Mendelssohn fame; and there, from the days of his boyhood, he had belonged to the little circle of intimates who frequently gathered around the master at his house.

When, a few years later, he came to Belgium on a concert tour, he and I found no difficulty in taking up the old friendship contracted in my father's house, just where we had left it. The boy had become the man, the student had developed into the artist and thorough musician. He was the boonest of boon companions, and his jokes were so broad that they often reminded one, in their crudeness and their rudeness, of certain passages in Mozart's early letters. To say that he spoke French with a German accent à la Svengali would be putting it very mildly; Teutonic gutturals would most unceremoniously invade the sister language; d's and t's, b's and p's would ever change places, as they are made to do in some parts of the Fatherland. With all that, he rejoiced in a delightful fluency of speech, conveying quaint and original thought. There was something decidedly interesting about Brassin's looks, but his figure gave one the impression of

COFFEE AND BRASSIN IN BOBTAIL'S ROOMS.

having been very carelessly put together; when he walked his head went back on his shoulders, and his hat went back on his head; his long arms dangled, pendulum-like, by his sides, while his lanky legs, dragging along anyhow, were ever lagging behind one another. But when he opened the piano and put hands and feet to keys and pedal, he was not the same individual. He would turn on nerve and muscle-power, and would hurl avalanches of music and torrents of notes at his audience till he, in his turn, was overwhelmed with thunders of applause. And those were the days, we must remember, when but few men could play at a greater rate than twenty to twenty-five miles an hour; when grand pianos were not yet ironclad and armour-plated, or had learnt proudly to display the maker's name on their broadside when they went forth to do battle on the concert field.

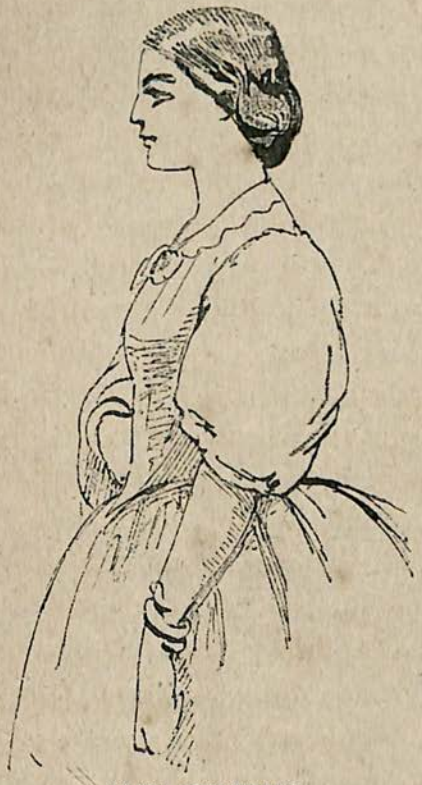
Brassin used to draw inane caricatures of himself, which he would present to us with a triumphant laugh of immoderate calibre. I have preserved some of these, but decidedly prefer du Maurier's rendering of our common friend. In the accompanying drawing he shows him at the piano, entertaining us on "A rainy day."

"Ah! Felix, amico mio," he says, "may thy room be always as jolly, thy coffee be ever so sweet, as on that happy morning! May Brassin's fingers be ever as brilliant and inspired! May Tag be ever as lazy, and with equal satisfaction to himself, and may I never be blinder! Amen."

That sketch admirably pourtrays the lankiness and flabbiness of Brassin's figure, contrasting as it did with the strength of the wrist and the grip of the fingers. He was certainly a fine subject for du Maurier, whom I always looked upon as a sort of vivisector of music and musicians, of their methods and their moods. A brilliant career awaited Louis Brassin, but it was to be suddenly and unexpectedly cut off. He died some ten years ago at the age of forty-four.

In 1858 my father came on a visit to Antwerp with my mother and my youngest sister, Clara. Wherever my father took up his abode, even temporarily, a grand piano would in the natural course of events gravitate towards him, and a select circle of art lovers would soon be grouped around it. Amongst the friends in the Antwerp circle were—Van Lerius, Tadema, Baron Leys, Heyermans, and Bource. My sister at that time was a bright and happy creature, not long

out of her teens, full of hopes—alas! never to be realised, and of talents never to be matured. The large dark eyes—they seemed the gift of her



CLARA MOSCHELES.

godmother, the famous Malibran—reflected the artist's soul, and a grand soprano voice spoke its powerful language. Du Maurier and she were

soon on a brother and sisterly footing, and they ever remained so.

Of the pleasant evenings we of the circle spent together I recall one in particular. My sister had been singing one song after another; my father was engaged in an animated conversation with Stefani, the pianist, on the relative merits of Mendelssohn and Schumann. Du Maurier and I had been sitting at the farther end of the room, talking of his eyes. At that time one doctor held out hopes; another, a great authority, had considered it his painful duty not to conceal the truth from his patient, and had, with much unction and the necessary complement of professional phraseology, prepared him for the worst. The sight of one eye had gone, that of the other would follow. Those were anxious days, both for him and for his friends; but, whatever he felt, he could talk about his trouble with perfect equanimity, and I often wondered how quietly he took it, and how cheerfully he would tell me that he was "fearfully depressed." That evening I had been putting the chances of a speedy recovery before him, and making predictions based, I am bound to admit, on nothing more substantial than my ardent hopes. But du Maurier

was too much of a philosopher to be satisfied with such encouragement as I could give, and said: "No, I had better face the enemy and be prepared for the worst. If it comes, you see, my dear fellow, there is Nature's law of compensation, and I firmly believe that one cannot lose one faculty without being compensated by some great gain elsewhere. I suppose one gets to see more inside as things grow darker outside. If one can't paint, one must do something else—write perhaps; that is, as long as one can, and then, if the steam accumulates, and one wants a safety valve to let it off, dictate." Happily, to this day he writes, and need not have recourse to dictation.

When we joined our friends we found Van Lerius and Heyermans had been pressed into the service, and were making sketches for my sister's album. Du Maurier took up a pencil, and, with a few characteristic touches, drew that sister's eyes. "Quand je les vois," he wrote underneath, "j'oublie les miens. (Reflexion d'un futur aveugle.) When I see them I forget my own. (Reflections of a man going blind.)"

Soon the main business of the evening was

resumed. Was it Beethoven's sonata for piano and violin, or a mighty improvisation on classical themes that came first? I do not recollect; but I remember that du Maurier's rendering of Balfe's "When other lips and other hearts," with my scratch accompaniment, was warmly greeted by all lips and hearts present.

When these pleasant evenings had come to an end, the friendly intercourse was not allowed to drop, and so a number of sketches by her new friends found their way into Miss Clara's album.

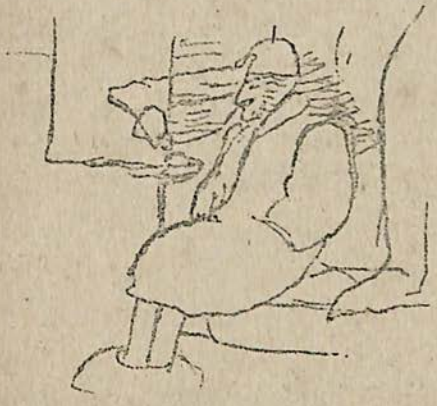
In the following winter, when I left on a short visit to Leipsic, he sent her a few lines through me. I quote from his letter because the wording is peculiar, and illustrates his capacity for expressing himself in a language that he had to evolve from his inner consciousness :—

"Herr Rag schickt zu Fräulein Moscheles *sein* empfehlung und *ihren* bruder; es wird höflicht gebeten das sie wird die sach reciprokiren, und in fünftzen dägen *ihr* empfehlung und *seinen* freund zuruck schicken."

For the benefit of those whose inner consciousness is not in touch with the above, I give the English version :—

"Mr. Rag sends *his* greeting and *her* brother

to Miss Moscheles, and kindly requests her to reciprocate the proceeding in a fortnight by returning *her* greeting and *his* friend."

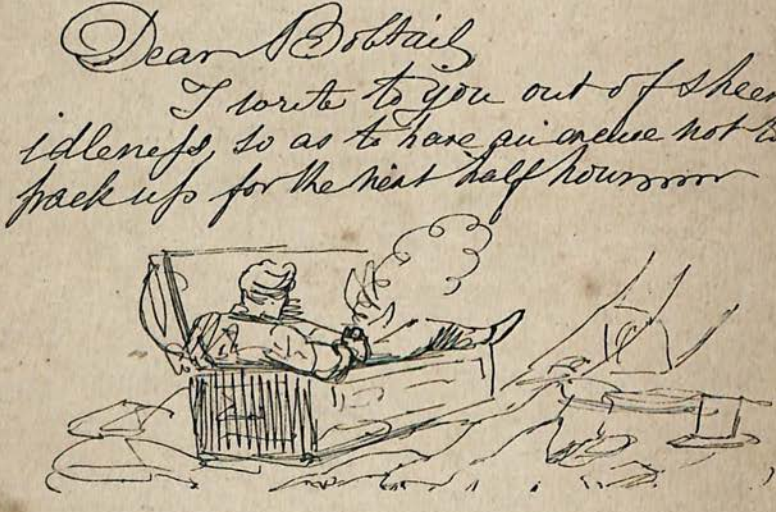


"HERR RAG SCHICKT ZU FRÄULEIN MOSCHELES SEIN EMPFEHLUNG UND IHREN BRUDER."

When I think how easily and spontaneously such sketches dropped from his pen, I am reminded of a passage in one of Mendelssohn's letters to my mother; he sends her the *Mailied* and says: "This morning a song came to me. I really must write it down for you." So, too, from the first the pen-and-ink compositions came to du Maurier. His talent manifested itself not only in a desire to illustrate this or that incident or adventure, but also in his inexhaustible capacity

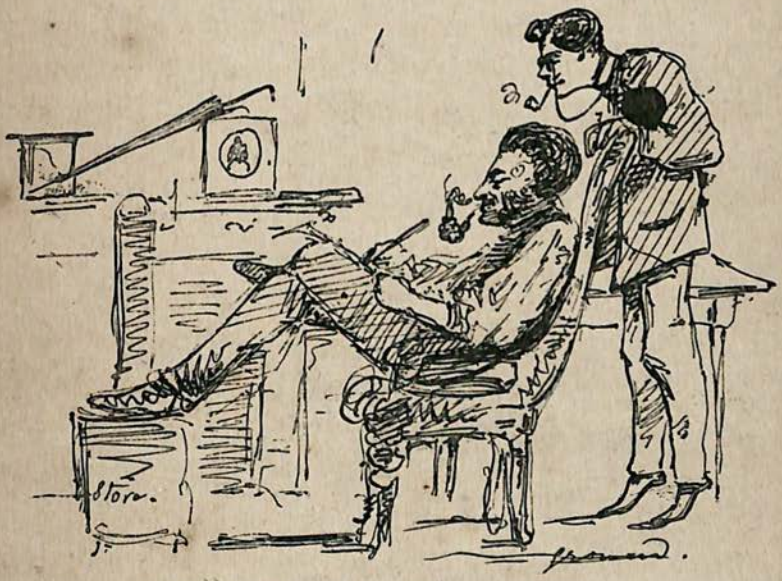
for making something out of nothing, and as the nothing was never lacking, he might well say: "Dear Bobtail, I will never write without sending my compliments to thine album." His rendering of "Cher Lix," for instance, takes the shape of a graceful monogram, or diplogram, or whatever I ought to call a combination of our two profiles and my name.

LIX.



He starts a short missive with a sketch of himself seated in his trunk, pipe in mouth, and

says: "Dear Bobtail, I write to you out of sheer idleness, so as to have an excuse not to pack up for the next half-hour." Or he draws himself looking over my shoulder whilst I am



AN INDISCREET FELLOW LOOKING OVER MY——

writing to my sister and puts the supposed context of my letter:—

"Bobtail writes (in German of course):

"I won't write any more, for there's an indiscreet fellow looking over my——"

'*Rag.* It's not true, I swear. (For Miss Clara.)"

Another time he wants me to send him some brushes and various other painting materials he

DU MAURIER AT WORK AGAIN.

enumerates: "Oh, and a little thing like this for oil to do the thing cheesy." He depicts himself quite elated; his eyes seemed so much better that he had once more resumed work in the

studio of his friend Goyers. "Gruss from maternal and self," he ends; "ganz hertzlich; come soon, or write soon, or do something soon, hang it.—Thy RAG, jusqu' à la mort."

Monsieur Staps, Sous-Chef of the "Guides," the best military band in Brussels, was a friend of

"CLAUDIUS FELIX ET PUBLIUS BUSSO, CUM CENTURIONE GUIDORUM, AUDIENTES JUVENES CONSERVATORIONI."

ours. He had invited us to one of the famous Concerts du Conservatoire, a treat in anticipation of which du Maurier at once takes to the pen, and shows us in classical garments and dignified attitudes listening to the "young men of the Conservatorio." "Sketch represents," he says

"Claudius Felix et Publius Busso, cum centurione Guidorum, audientes juvenes Conservatorioni, A.D. CCLVIII." The "Busso" derived from his full name—George Louis Palmella Busson du Maurier.

In striking contrast with the last drawing is the next. Here we are decidedly anything but conventional in our attire, as he depicts us in "Double-bedded room, Brussels. Time 11 a.m. (train starts 11.20). Bobtail's face being rather smutty, he washes it, and Rag's boots being rather tight, he puts them on at leisure, during which process he has time to smoke three pipes. *Bobtail.* Bub-bub-bub-bub . . . whew . . . pouf! . . . *Rag.* How many?"

A favourite theme of his was his supposed inability to shine on occasions when I had introduced him to friends of mine, and was particularly anxious to show him off to advantage, and then, again, the unrelenting fate that would swiftly overtake him if he ventured to put himself forward. I need not say that the inability and the discomfiture existed only in his imagination, for in all circles he was ever appreciated and admired. But he would have it other-

Double Bedded Room in Brussels, time 11 A.M.

——. ——(Train starts 11.20.)——

Bobtail's face being rather smutty, he washes it, and Bag's boots being rather tight, he puts them on at leisure (during which process he has time to smoke 3 pipes.)

Bobt:— Bub bub bub bub... whew... pouf...

Bag — How many?

wise, and pourtrays us side by side with the legend—

"The height of enjoyment.
Rag thinking of his eyes, in a pair of tight boots, with Bobtail whispering: 'Say something clever, you stupid muff!'"

Another drawing shows what happened when for once in a way he presumed to accept the homages of the fair.

"One fine morninge, earlie, at ye Café de la Plage, Blankenberghe, ye celebrated Rag, deeming himself alone, treateth himself to a private performance of ye Padre furioso e figlia infelice, in imitatione of his illustrious friende, Felix Bobtailo. Presentlie a voice exclaimeth behind him, 'Monsieur, permettez moi de vous féliciter,' and a ladie politelie maketh him complimente on his talente. Rag replieth that she must not be surprised thereat, as hys life has been spent among ye great musicians, and that therefore he can scarçelie helpe being a consummate musician himselfe. Shortly after as he lighteth hys cigarre at ye barre, he enquireth bumptiously, 'Who might that good ladie be?' 'She is the prima-donna of the Munich Opera, Monsieur.' Whereupon ye soul of ye humiliated Rag sinketh into hys bootes, and he retireth for ever under a perpetual extinguisher.

"Ye hero of ye above unfortunate adventure presenteth hys compliments to Miss Clara Moscheles, and beggeth she will deigne to accepte ye sketche in acknowledgment of ye last box of 'acidulated lemon-flavoured droppes' entrusted to her brother's care (need he remark that they have not yet reached their destination).

"Miss Clara is invited to observe how cunninglie ye profile of Rag is made to imitate that of her talented brother."

Du Maurier's stay in Blankenberghe was but short. He soon went to Düsseldorf to put him-

YE CELEBRATED RAG TREATETH HIMSELF TO A PRIVATE PERFORMANCE OF YE PADRE FURIOSO E FIGLIA INFELICE.

self under the treatment of a famous oculist, Hofrath de Leeuwe, who resided not far from there at Gräfrath. He wrote, in high spirits: "Spent yesterday in Gräfrath; jolly place, lots of beauties, plenty of singing and sketching and that sort of thing, you know. Long walks in

beautiful valleys, most delightful. The fact is, I'm so beastly merry since I've been here that I don't think I'm quite sane, and altogether only want your periodical visits and permission to have my fling on Saturday nights to be in heaven. Doctor says he'll do me good; have to go to Gräfrath once a week. Ça me bote joliment. Good-bye, my old. Thine ever

He had met some old acquaintances and fraternised with some English and American artists, had got into the swim of Gräfrath society, such as it was, and was soon placed on a pedestal, whilst sundry beauties sat at his feet and, to the best of my belief, sighed. "They all want me to make etchings of the little can-cans and lick-spittlings going on here. Splendid study; shall

think about it. Carry novel, of course, adjourned *sine die;* haven't got time just now—you know what a fellow I am. Just got her letter; very naïve and amusing—but don't tell her so, or else she will pose for that and spoil it. Here is a

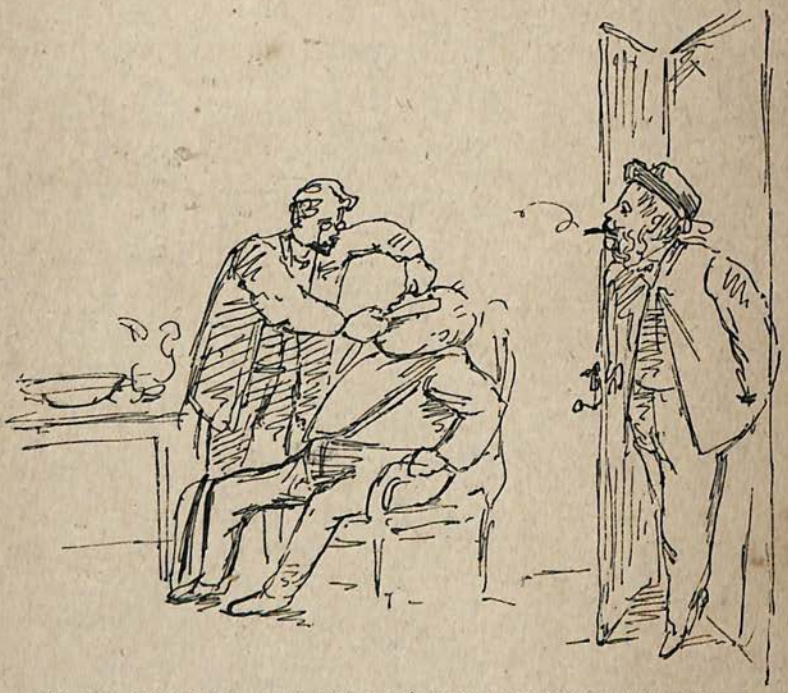
AT THE HOFRATH'S DOOR.

"SHE. REALLY I DON'T SEE THE SLIGHTEST MOTE IN YOUR EYES."
"HE. NO, BUT I CAN SEE THE BEAMS IN YOURS."

little drawing for you. Do all honour to it, since it has met with a little ovation here."

He calls it "a new adaptation from the New Testament." He and a charming "she" sit waiting their turn at the Hofrath's door. *He* is

looking into her eyes and *she* into his. "Really I don't see the slightest mote in your eyes," says she. "No, but I can see the beams in yours," he replies.



"I SAY, GOVERNOR, MIND YOU DON'T GASH HIS THROAT AS YOU DID THAT POOR OLD SPANIARD'S!"

Did du Maurier ever attempt to shave anybody, I wonder? According to one of the sketches he sent me from Düsseldorf he did, and was so engaged on a blind man Kennedy,

when a Captain Marius comes on the scene and says, in discreet whisper and with much concern, "I say, governor, mind you don't gash his throat as you did that poor old Spaniard's! (*Out loud*) How d'ye do, Kennedy?"

The same Mr. Kennedy figures once more,

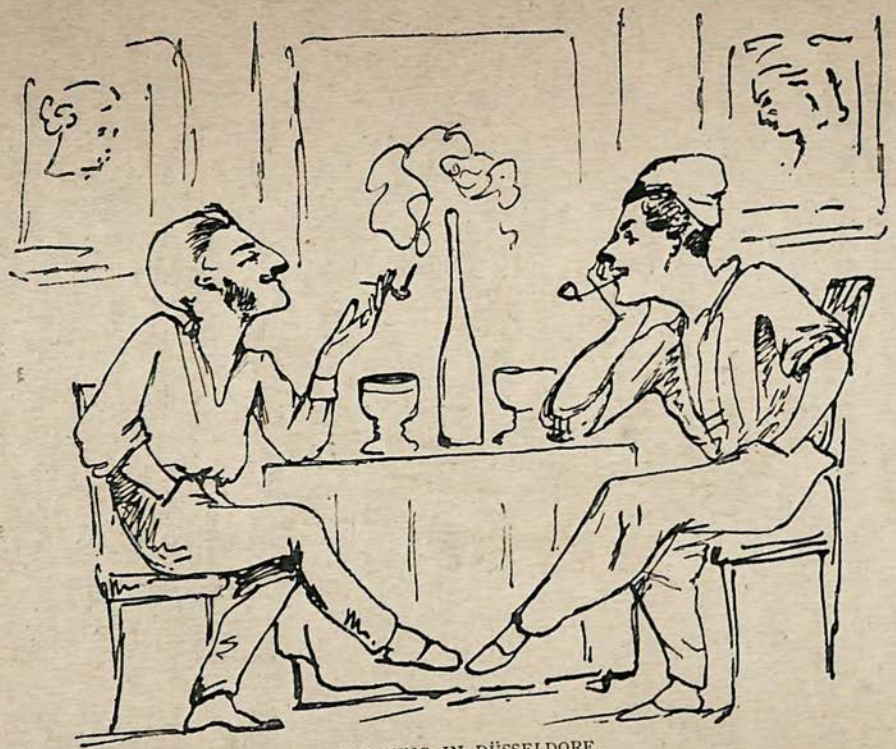
MR. KENNEDY, WHO IS QUITE BLIND, DISCREETLY INFORMS THE PROFESSOR THAT CAPTAIN MARIUS BLUEBLAST "IS NA BUT A SINFU' BLACKGUARD."

when, unaware of the presence of the captain, he discreetly informs the professor that Captain Marius Blueblast "is na' but a sinfu' blackguard."

A portrait he drew of the doctor was a great success. "I have done the old cock's portrait

stunningly," he says; "nine crosses of the Legion of Honour, &c. Not a sou into my pocket; all for poor-box. Fancy a fellow like me making presents to the poor-box (*vide* sketch)! But as

the portrait will be very much spilt about (*répandu*), I may fish a stray order or two. I have followed your advice for a whole week and done a magnificent Framboisy. Shall not attempt to go on until you are here to give me another stirring-up. Am going to Antwerp next week (always am). Shall you be moving too? Journey together—great fun. Take care of my



MEETING IN DÜSSELDORF.

WE SAT INTO THE SMALL HOURS OF THE MORNING, TALKING OF THE PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

"SCENE FROM MACPHERSON'S OSSIAN :—

"Dark was the sun! Heavy the clouds on the cliffs of Oithona—when the fair-headed son of the Maurialva crossed his claymore with the stern dark-browed Bobthailva and swore friendship on the names of Carry and Damask."

purse and passport, and see my trunks are locked."

I was moving, and as du Maurier kept on being about to go to Antwerp, I went to pay him a flying visit at Düsseldorf on my way to Paris. We sat into the small hours of the morning (as he depicts us), talking of the past, present, and future, a long-necked Rhine-wine bottle and two green glasses beside us, our hopes and aspirations rising with the cloud that curled from my ever-glowing cigar. We talked till his fertile imagination took us across the sea, and "Ragmar of the Maurialva and Bobthailva, the son of Moscheles, swore eternal amity on their native heath."

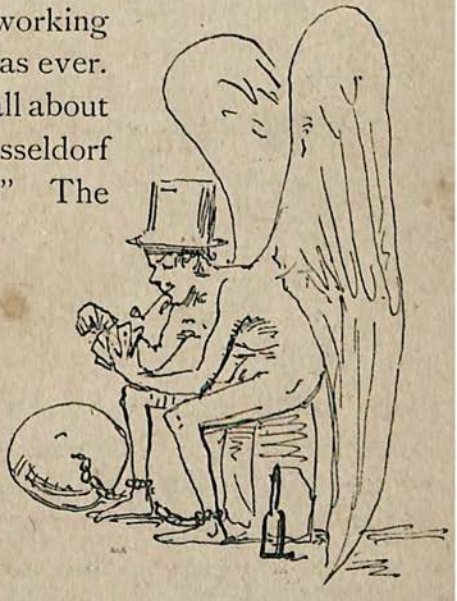
Damask was another beauty whom we appreciated, perhaps all the more because we knew she was dying of consumption.

In Paris I was probably absorbed in some work I had in hand and must have neglected du Maurier, for he writes urging me to answer by return of post and give an account of myself. He had been visited, he says, by an alarming nightmare, which he forthwith sketches for my benefit. Carry, the Circe, had captured the lion. The noble beast—that was me—had succumbed to the

wiles of the enchantress, and submitted tamely to being combed and brushed and to having his claws clipped by her hand. Like birds of a feather, so do lions of a name, flock together. And so another noble beast—that was he—is seen approaching, presumably to claim his share of the combing and clipping and of whatever other favours may be forthcoming.

Another time when, I suppose, I was again letting him wait for an answer, he writes from Düsseldorf: "DEAR BOBTAIL,—Est-ce que tu te donnes le genre de m'oublier par hazard? I

have been expecting a letter from you every day, running thus: 'DEAR RAG, —Come to Paris *immediately*, to illustrate thirty-six periodical papers which I have got for you. In haste, Bobtail.' My old pal, Tom Armstrong, is here, working hard; eyes the same as ever. Write soon and tell all about that portrait. Düsseldorf rencontre was jolly." The letter is headed by a drawing representing me soaring heavenwards, whilst he, chained to the spot, is philosophically consulting the cards on his prospects of release.



Then comes a postscript: "Going in for this sort of thing."

"Will you come old fellow and be

I suppose I answered saying that I only put off writing till I had mustered the full complement of periodicals. If I was in a prophetic mood I may have added that it was all right, and that very shortly thirty-six editors would be clamouring for his work, and perhaps thirty-six States hallooing for him to come over *immediately*.

Hoping to be punch'd at an early date, I probably remained his, &c., &c.

The early date came, for, before his final return to England, we met once more in Antwerp and Malines. And that takes me back to Carry. She was changed to her advantage, so, at least, the world of Malines thought. We were not quite so sure that the change would prove altogether to her advantage. She had been quite pretty enough before, and we thought she could well have done without developing further physical attractions. She had always known how to use her eyes, not unfrequently shedding their beneficent light on two persons at the same time, and we considered that that number should not be exceeded. But now their activity seemed daily increasing, and it was not without concern that we noticed in her a certain restlessness and a growing tendency to discuss with the serpent questions relating to the acquisition of prohibited apples. After a while, and perhaps in consequence of the good advice we gave her, she sobered down and surprised us by her docility; but at best her moods were uncertain and she puzzled us much.

"Now, Bobtail," said Rag, as we walked along

the sober old streets of Malines, discussing the state of Carry's mind and heart. (He has

omitted the streets, but has put us into our very best mediæval suit.) "Now, Bobtail, what do

you think? Is she in love? And if so, with whom?"

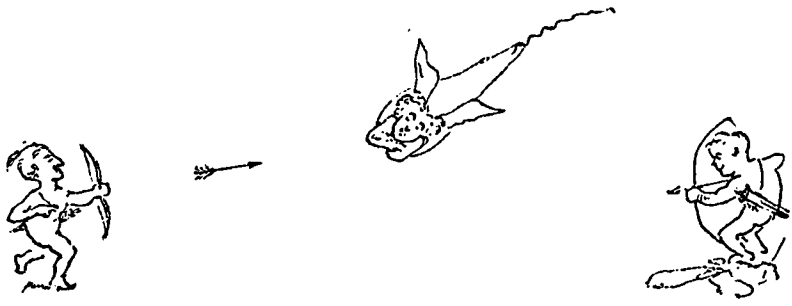
"She may be, or she may be not," said Bobtail, with oracular discretion; "but, if she is, it can only be with one of us. She would not waste her sentiment on a native whilst we were within reach."

"But which of us is it?" asked Rag, somewhat alarmed.

"I know not; but I hope neither," answered the oracle thus appealed to; "but the state of her mind, I believe, is this: If she were to marry you, she would fall in love with me; and if she were to marry me, she would fall in love with you."

This dictum must have impressed du Maurier, for it started him on a series of drawings, with accompanying text in illustration of it. There were to be two volumes. The first, in which I figure as the husband, was rapidly produced; the second, in which he was to be the husband, never saw the light of day. It was shelved *sine die*, a proceeding I always thought particularly unfair, as he never gave *me* a chance of being loved. I am compensated, however, by the possession of the first volume of the "Noces de Picciola," or

"Cari-catures," as they are called. On the title-page Bobtail is made to say :—



"If Carry were to marry one of us,
I'd give thee any odds she would be safe,
O Rag, to love the other——"
(*Shakespere.* "*Two Swells of Antwerp.*")

"Varium et mutabile semper femina," he adds, and his story illustrates the truth of the poet's words. His points will be so much better understood later on, when some of the problems connected with our matrimonial laws have been solved, that it would be a pity to publish them prematurely. Suffice it to show how Félix and Georges produced the portrait of Picciola. "Félix put all his talent and Georges all his good will into it, for, once completed, Picciola was to select a husband from the two suitors. After much cogitation she decides for Félix, whilst offering her friendship to Georges, who seems

but moderately satisfied with this arrangement; and then, when husband and wife leave for distant countries, Georges, who cannot bear the thought of being parted from his dear Picciola, enters the service of the young couple and accompanies them

PORTRAIT OF PICCIOLA.

on their honeymoon." This mythical journey gives the author opportunities for the subtle psychological analysis of a young lady's heart, strongly inclined to revolt against some of the conventions laid down by Society for its regulation.

We had fondly hoped we might escort and protect her on the thorny path of life, as pertinently shown in the drawing,[1] where we are all three going along, our arms and hands fraternally

"ON THEIR HONEYMOON."

intertwined and linked together in perfect symmetry, as if therewith to tie the knot of friendship and make it fast for ever and a day.

But it was not to be. A big wave intervened to

[1] See Frontispiece.

separate us, and swept away all traces of the road before us. Poor Carry! Yes, she had a story. Sad. Bright. Then sad again. First she gave to Amor what was Amor's, and then to Hymen what was Hymen's. She tasted of the apple her friend the serpent had told her so much about. Then—"la femme à une chute est rare comme le Niagara"—and there are more apples than one in the Garden of Eden—she tried another; such a bad one unfortunately. It was a wonder it didn't poison her, body and soul, but it didn't. There was a moment when the Angel with the flaming sword threatened to cast her adrift, and it would have fared badly with her had not a helping hand come to save her. But sound as she was at the core, and true, she rallied and rose again to new life and unhoped-for happiness. It was a young doctor who came to the rescue; a mere boy he seemed to look at; but a man he was in deed and word. He worked hard and walked fast; he defied convention and challenged fate. With a stout heart he laboured to raise Carry to the level of his affections, and with a strong hand he tightened his hold upon her. He loved her passionately, devotedly, and she, clinging to him as to the instrument of her

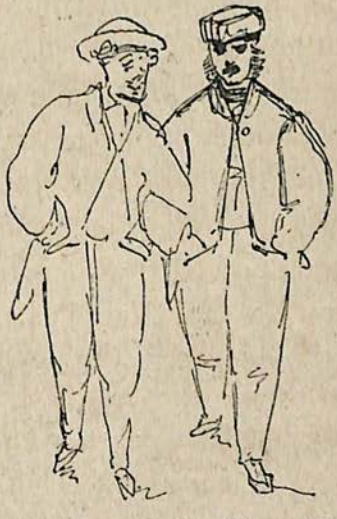
salvation, gradually regained her better self, and, slowly but surely, learnt to find in her own heart the greatest of treasures that woman can bestow upon man. But he was a Southerner of the French meridional type, excitable and impulsive, and, so, alas! he was jealous of Carry's northern friends and snapped the thread asunder that bound her to them. We only knew, and that we learnt in a roundabout way, that she was the happiest little wife in Paris. Once, and only once, she wrote to us, to tell us how complete was her happiness. A crowning glory had come; a little glory to nurse and fondle, to cry over—tears of joy; to smile to—the prettiest, foolishest of mother's smiles; to pray for and to worship from the bottom of her little blossoming soul. It was not till three years later that I was in Paris and succeeded in picking up the thread of Carry's story. Hale and hearty, overflowing with health and happiness, the young doctor had gone to his work at the hospital. He came home blood-poisoned, to die in his wife's arms. It was a case of self-sacrifice in the cause of science, of heroic devotion to a fellow-creature. And the young widow was left alone again, with none to weep over (tears of anguish this time) but the

little glory, who, poor thing, could only wonder, but not soothe. What can have become of Carry once more cast adrift in Paris to fight the battle of life in this hard ever love-making world?

We never knew.

Back to England. The time had come when—

> "Who was to be lucky and who to be rich,
> Who'd get to the top of the tree;
> Was a mystery which
> Dame Fortune, the witch,
> *Was* to tell du Maurier and me."



What with the boxing-gloves and one thing and another, he had been "getting English again by degrees." In a drawing he shows us how he is going through the process arm-in-arm with his old friend, Tom Armstrong, now the Art-Director of that very English institution, the South Kensington Museum. Armstrong and T. R. Lamont, the man who to this day bears such a striking resemblance to our friend the Laird,

had presented du Maurier with a complete edition of Edgar Allan Poe's works. His appreciation of that author is expressed in a letter which he addressed to Armstrong, and it needs not much reading between the lines to gather what was the literary diet best suited to his taste. It is amusing, too, to notice the little shadows cast here and there by coming events.

(Billy Barlow was, I really don't know why, for the time being, synonymous with George du Maurier.)

"Gulielmus Barlow, Thomasino Armstrong,
Whom we hope is 'gaillardement' getting along
And salubrious, ave!
You'll wonder, I ween,
At Barlow's turning topsy-tur—poet I mean.
I take odds you'll exclaim, 'twixt a grunt and a stare,
'Gottferdummi' the beggar's gone mad, I declare,
And his wits must have followed his 'peeper'—not so;
He will give you the wherefore, will William Barlow—
Viz: he's so seedy and blue, he's so deucedly triste,
He's so d——d out of sorts, he's so d——d out of tune,
That for mere consolation he cannot resist
The temptation of holding with Tommy commune.
Then that *he* should be bothered alone, isn't fair,
So he'll just bother *you* a bit, pour se distraire,
This will partly account for the milk—then the fact is
That some heavy swell says that it's deuced good practice,
And then it's a natural consequence, too,
Of the classical culture he's just been put through.

I'll explain : T'other day the maternal did say,
'You are sadly deficient in reading, Bill ; nay
Do not wrinkle your forehead and turn up your nose
(That elegant feature of William Barlow's !)
You've read Thackeray, Dickens, I know ; but it's fit
You should study the *classical* authors a bit.
Heaven knows when your sight will be valid again,
You may throw down the pencil and take up the pen,
And you cannot have too many strings to your bow.'
—'A-a-amen !' says young William to Mrs. Barlow.

So we're treated (our feelings we needn't define)
To a beastly slow book called the 'Fall and Decline'
By a fellow called Gibbon, be d——d to him ; then
Comes the 'Esprit des lois et des mœurs,' from the pen
Of a chap hight *Voltaire*—un pédant—qui je crois
Ne se fichait pas mal et des mœurs et des lois.
After which just to vary the pleasures, *Rousseau*
By Emile—no : Emile by *Rousseau ?* Gad ! I know
That which ever it be it's infernally slow,
And I'm glad Billy's neither Emile nor Rousseau—
Such my fate is to listen to, longing to slope—
Then come horrid long epics of Dryden and Pope,
Which I mentally swear a big oath I'll confine
To the tombs of the Capulets, every line—
Not but what the old beggars may do in their way,
Gad ! Uncommonly fine soporifics are they ;
But they seem after Tennyson, Shelley, and Poe
Just a trifle *too* Rosy for Billy Barlow—
Oh, dear Raggedy, oh !
Ulalume and Ænone for William Barlow.

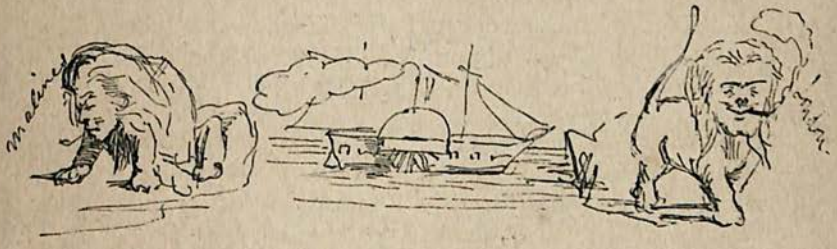
Erst, they're short. Then they breathe in their mystical tone
An essence, a spirit, a draught which alone
Can content Billy's lust, for the weird and unknown

(Billy's out of his depth) they've an undefined sense
Of the infinite 'mersed in their sorrow intense
(Billy's sinking ! A rope ! Some one quick ! Damn it !
hence
That mystical feeling so sweetly profound
Which weaves round the senses a spell (Billy's drowned)
(Here run for the drags of the Royal Humane !)
A mystical feeling, half rapture, half pain,
Such as moves in sweet melodies, such as entrances
In Chopin's 'Etudes,' and in Schubert's 'Romances.'

Ah ! Chopin's 'Impromptu' ! Schubert's 'Serenade' !
Have you ever heard these pretty decently played ?
If you haven't, old fellow, I'll merely observe
That a treat most delicious you have in reserve.
Lord ! How Billy's soul grazes in diggins of clover,
While Stefani rapidly fingers them over,
Feelingly, fervidly fingers them over.
Illusion that enervates ! Feverish dream
Of excitement magnetic, inspired, supreme,
Or despairing dejection, alternate, extreme !
Gad ! These opium-benumbing performances seem,
In their sad wild unresting irregular flow
Just expressly concocted for William Barlow.
Oh ! dear Raggedy, oh !
Why, they ravish the heart, sir, of Billy Barlow."

Du Maurier's stay on the Continent had come to a close some time before mine, and to that circumstance I owe several letters in which he speaks of his first experiences in London. He revelled in the metamorphosis he was going

through, and illustrated the past and the present for my better comprehension. There on one side of the Channel he shows the dejected old lion of Malines gnawing his tobaccoless clay pipe, and then on the other the noble beast stalking along



jauntily with tail erect and havannah alight. He wrote in high spirits :—

"Dear Bobtail,—I need not tell you how very jolly it was to get your letter and to hear good news of you. My reason for not writing was that I intended to make my position before giving of my news to anybody. I was just funky and blue about it at first, but fortunately I was twigged almost immediately, and, barring my blessed idleness, am getting on splendaciously just now. Lots of my things have been out. I'm going in for becoming a swell.

"How strange to think of such a change. I'm

leading the merriest of lives, and only hope it will last. Living with Henley, No. 85, Newman Street; very jolly and comfortable. Chumming with all the old Paris fellows again, all of them going ahead. There's Whistler is already one of the great celebrities here—Poynter getting on. This is a very jolly little village, and I wish you were over here. They do make such a fuss with an agreeable fellow like you or me, for instance. But I suppose Paris is just as jolly in its way. My ideas of Paris are all Bohème, quartier latin, &c., et si c'était à recommencer, ma foi je crois que je dirais 'zut.' This is a hurried and absurd letter to write to an old pal like you, but I hardly ever have time for a line—out late every night and make use of what little daylight there is in Newman Street to draw. 'S'il faisait au moins clair de Lune pendant le jour dans ce sacré pays.' I daresay I shall treat myself to a trip over to Paris as soon as the weather is jollier. I intend to go abroad this summer to do some etchings 'qui seront aux pommes.' Is there any chance whatever of your coming over here before? You mustn't form your opinion of my performances by what you may happen to see, as half of what I do is spoiled by bad engraving (that's why I intend

to etch), and what I have done, bar one or two things, are merely little chic sketches for money. I have many plans; among others I intend to bring out a series in *Punch*, with which I shall take peculiar care—something quite original. I think you would precious soon get more portraits than you could paint here, but if you are getting on so well in Paris, of course it would be madness to leave. But I do not like the idea of your not being one of us—such a band of brothers full of jolly faults that dovetail beautifully. It was quite a freak of mine coming over here; I did it against everybody's advice—came over with a ten-pound note and made the rest. 'Your friend Bobtail seems to be the only man who had no doubt of your talent,' writes my mother. 'Enfin c'est prouvé que je suis au moins bon a quelque chose.' Do you go much into the world? I go knocking about as happily as possible, singing and smoking cigars everywhere. Jimmy Whistler and I go 'tumbling' together, as Thackeray says. Would you were here to tumble with us! Enfin, mon bon, écris moi vite."

When at last I too returned to London I was privileged to take my humble share in the "tumbling," as also in the steady process that

was gradually to wean us from Bohemia. We tumbled pretty regularly into the Pamphilon, a restaurant within a stone's throw of Oxford Circus, of the familiar type that exhibits outside its door a bill of fare with prices appended, to be studied by those who count their shillings and pence as we did. We had got beyond the days when no wines are sour and when tough meat passes muster, if there is only plenty of it; we wanted a sound dinner, and we got it at the Pamphilon; to wind up we adjourned to the coffee-room and talked and read and smoked.

Stacey Marks, Poynter, Jimmy Whistler, and Charles Keene were among the crew, and others not so well known to fame. Pleasant hours those and gemüthliche, as the Germans say; how different the after-dinner clay pipe or cheap weed of those times to the post-prandial havannah we now complacently whiff at our friend's Mæcenas' hospitable table! Yes, things have changed, my dear Rag, since the day we were paying our bill, and you addressed the waiter with superb affability: "Here, Charles, is a penny for you. I know it isn't much, but I can't afford more."

It is hard to fancy anything less like Bohemia than Regent Street, but a little incident that

occurred as I walked down that busy thoroughfare one afternoon recalls the best traditions of the land in which practical jokes abound. I was going along without any definite aim, killing time and gathering wool, flanéing, in fact; perhaps there was a touch of the foreigner about me, for I had only lately returned from abroad; anyway I suddenly found myself singled out as a fit subject to be victimised. I felt a hand stealthily sliding into my pocket; on the spur of the moment I grasped that hand in as much of an iron grip as I could muster. Then—I hardly know why—I waited quite a number of seconds before I turned round. When I did, it was du Maurier's face that I beheld, blanched with terror. Those seconds had been ages to him. Good heavens! had he made a mistake? Was it not Bobtail's but another man's hand that was clutching his wrist? Thank Heaven, it was Bobtail's!

There never was an occasion, before or after, I feel absolutely sure, when du Maurier was more truly glad to see me. His colour rapidly returned, and he swore that of all the bonnes blagues this was the best; but for all that, one thing is certain —he has never since attempted to pick pockets in Regent Street.

A delightful compromise between Bohemia and the land where well-regulated Society rules supreme, was the ground on which stood Moray Lodge, the residence of Arthur Lewis, the head of the well-known firm of Lewis and Allenby.

We have read of him before :—

"Sir Lewis Cornelys, as everybody knows, lives in a palace on Campden Hill, a house of many windows, and, whichever window he looks out of, he sees his own garden and very little else. There was no pleasanter, or more festive house than his in London, winter or summer."

I quote this, as probably it may not be known to everybody that Sir Lewis was knighted on the memorable occasion of Trilby's birthday, when she was presented at the drawing—and every other—room. With much kindly forethought his friend and biographer allows him to be eighty years old in the early sixties, thereby enabling him to have attained to-day the ripe old age of one hundred and fourteen.

Well, he was one of du Maurier's earliest friends, and when Taffy the Laird, and Little Billie, "a-smokin' their pipes and cigyars," told the cabby to drive to Mechelen Lodge, I found my way to what I called Moray Lodge, and met

them there. And there too, to be sure, was Glorioli, "the tall, good-looking swarthy foreigner from whose scarcely parted, moist, thick, bearded lips issued the most ravishing sounds that had ever been heard from throat of man or woman or boy."

As we now empty one or the other of the million bottles that are about, marked "De Soria, Bordeaux," we often think with gratitude of the great wine-grower and still greater singer, so correctly described as "singing best for love or glory in the studios of his friends."

To return to Arthur Lewis:—

He occupied an exceptional position, inasmuch as he had made his house a centre towards which intellectual London gravitated. When he had done this, that, and the other to make his bachelor days memorable to a host of friends, he wound up by marrying one of England's fairest women, our great actress, Kate Terry. It was in those early days that Ellen, the débutante, was introduced to the dramatic world as "Kate Terry's sister." Since then Kate, having elected to rest on her laurels, is proud to be referred to by the younger generation as "Ellen Terry's sister."

In early life Lewis had various roads open to him. Born, as he was, with the capacity of a man of business, the means and opportunities of a man of leisure, and the talents of an artist, he managed to follow the three roads at the same time, and they all led to well-deserved success. He was to be found at his desk in Regent Street, at his easel in the studio, or on the threshold of that big billiard and reception room which he had built to entertain his friends. Himself an artist, and for many years a regular exhibitor at the Royal Academy, he was on terms of close friendship with the men who had made their mark in the art-world, and with many who were destined to become famous. He was a Mæcenas of the right sort, knowing a good thing when he came across it, and frequently acquiring it before the sleepy world awoke to its merits.

I well recollect the enthusiasm with which he welcomed the first pictures Joseph Israels exhibited in England in 1862. Neither in the English nor in the Dutch department of the Exhibition could he ascertain whether these two pictures, "The Drowned Fisherman" and "Washing the Cradle," were for sale. But luck would have it that he was introduced to Israels

at the Academy *soirée*, and the artist, assuring him that the pictures were "certainly for sale," Lewis secured the coveted works, and was thus the first to establish Israels' fame in England.

The gatherings in Moray Lodge were unique in their way. It was characteristic of the master and the house that they made everybody feel at home, from the titled aristocrat in the dress-suit to the free-and-easy brother-brush or pen, and the sometimes out-at-elbow friend Bohemian.

There was the Duke of Sutherland, the Marquis of Lorne, Lord Dufferin, Mr. Frederic Leighton, Associate of the Royal Academy, Fred Walker, who sang tenor in the choir, of which more presently, and who on several occasions designed the cards of invitation for Lewis. There was Lord Houghton, Charles Dickens, Wilkie Collins, Rossetti, Landseer, Daubigny, Gustave Doré, Arthur Sullivan, Leech, Keene, Tenniel, &c., &c. It is as hard to pass those names over without comment as it must have been to run the gauntlet of Scylla and Charybdis, for every one of them brings back some recollection, and calls upon the pen to start a paragraph with an "I well remember."

But that would lead me away from Moray

Lodge and the famous Saturday evenings, and I never was, and am not now, in a hurry to get away from that hospitable mansion.

The billiard-table was boxed over on the gala nights and transformed into a buffet. It was covered with bottles and glasses, pipes and cigars, and towards the close of the evening with mountains of oysters. The amount we consumed on one occasion was 278 dozen, as I happen to know. But the great attraction at these gatherings was the part-singing of the twenty-five "Moray Minstrels." John Foster was the conductor, and led them to such perfection that the severest critic of the day, dear old crabbed Henry F. Chorley, proclaimed them the best representatives of the English school of glee-singing.

Another no less interesting feature was the performance of small theatrical pieces. Du Maurier and Harold Power had given us charming musical duologues, like "Les Deux Aveugles," by Offenbach, and "Les Deux Gilles," with great success, and that led to further developments and far-reaching consequences. A small party of friends were dining with Lewis. "What shall we get up next?" was the question

raised. "Something new and original," suggested the host. "Now, Sullivan, you should write us something." "All right," said Sullivan, "but how about the words? Where's the libretto?" "Oh, I'll write that," said Burnand. And thus those two were started. "Cox and Box," a travesty of "Box and Cox," was read and rehearsed a fortnight afterwards at Burnand's house, and the following Saturday it was performed at Moray Lodge. Du Maurier was "Box," Harold Power "Cox," and John Foster "Sergeant Bouncer." Du Maurier's rendering of "Hush-a-by, Bacon," was so sympathetic and tender that one's heart went out to the contents of the frying-pan, wishing them pleasant dreams.

Then there was his famous duet with "Box," reciting their marriage to one and the same lady, and the long recitative in which the printer describes his elaborate preparations for suicide.

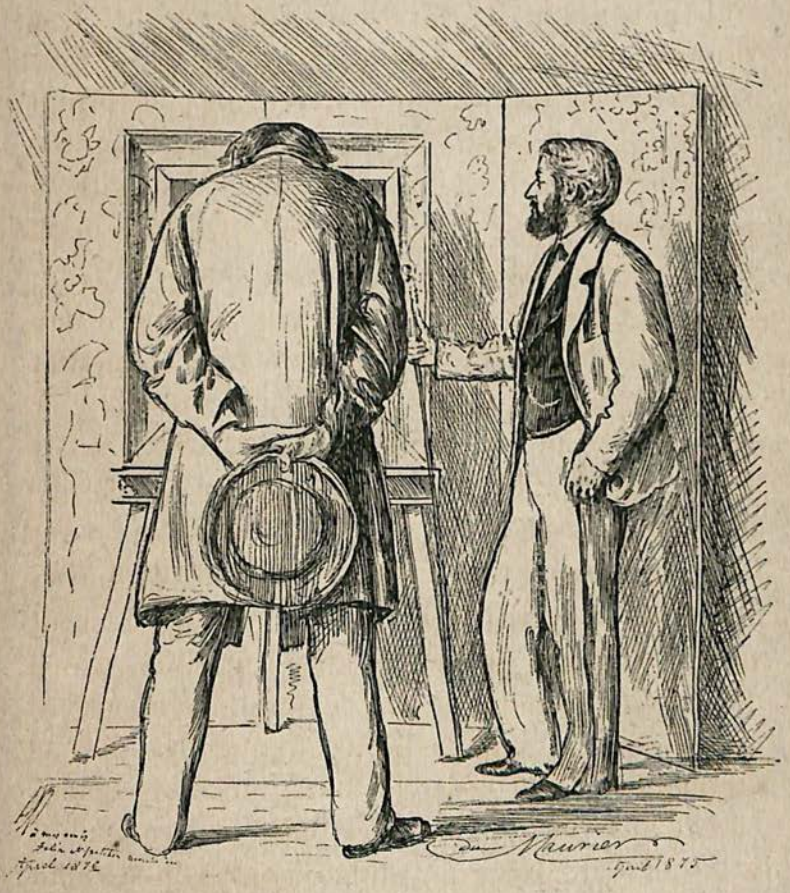
How he solemnly walked to the cliff and heard the seagulls' mournful cry—and looked all around—there was nobody nigh. Then (disposing his bundle on the brink)—"Away to the opposite side I walked." ("Away," on the high A, that Sullivan put in on purpose for du

Maurier, who possessed that chest-note in great fulness.)

I must skip a few years and speak of a drawing that appeared in *Punch* in 1875,[1] and which has a special interest for me; it brings back to my mind a happy thought of du Maurier's, which is closely connected with a particularly happy thought of my own, that took root then and has flourished ever since.

I must explain that there was a time when I had to console myself with the reflection that the course of true love never runs smooth. A lady whom in my mind I had selected as a mother-in-law, by no means reciprocated my feelings of respect and goodwill. But the young lady, her daughter, fortunately sided with me, and had, in fact, given her very willing consent to the change in her mother's position which I had suggested. I was naturally anxious to assure that young lady as frequently and as emphatically as possible how much I appreciated her assistance, and how determined I was never to have any other mother-in-law but the one of my choice; nor could there be

[1] Published by kind permission of the proprietors of *Punch*.



anything obscure in such a declaration, as of three sisters in the family that particular one was the only unmarried one. But neither in obscure nor in explicit language was I allowed to approach her; a blockade was declared and rigorously enforced, and we were soon separated by a distance of some few hundred miles.

I can look back complacently on the troubles of those days now that twenty years have elapsed since I emerged victorious from the contest; but then the future looked blank and bleak, and I felt nonplussed and down-hearted. Knowing, however, what a faint heart is said never to win, I was anxious to keep mine up to the mark, and with a view to stimulating its buoyancy I went to make a friendly call on du Maurier. He would, I felt sure, be sympathetic, and, whatever else might be wanting in that troublesome eye of his, there would be a certain vivifying twinkle in it that could always set me up.

It was as I expected, and I had the full benefit of the eye, and of an ear, too, that he lent willingly as I told him how matters stood.

"Well," he said, "if you can't smuggle in à

letter, let's smuggle in your portrait. It will be rather a joke if she comes across you in *Punch.* I've just got a subject in which I can use you."

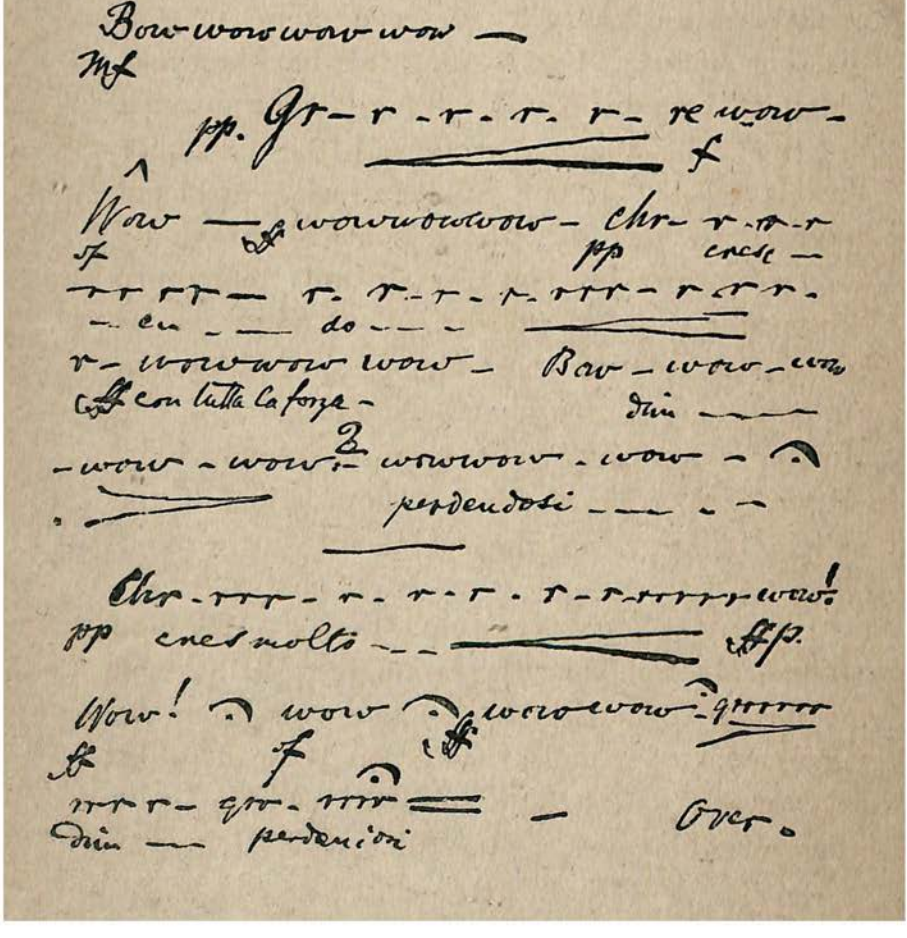
To be sure, I jumped at the idea, only beseeching him to make me as handsome as he possibly could, without losing sight of the main object, viz., that the young lady should be able to recognise me. Her mother too, I felt sure, would not fail to be duly impressed, for to figure in *Punch* would raise me in her estimation as a person of no small importance.

The drawing was made and published, and the scheme worked well; coupled, perhaps, with a few millions of other influences, and with the assistance of the Fates, it achieved the desired result, and before a year had elapsed the original drawing could be presented by du Maurier to the young lady, now become a bride, as a memento of bygone troubles.

One more digression suggested by the name of Arthur Sullivan; it shall be the last. I am not going back to the time when we were boys together in Leipsic, but will only mention him in connection with Carry; this time Carry in another form.

3 Ponsonby St. Pimlico. S.W.

Aug^t 10^th 1881.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Over.

Shortly after that big wave intervened that separated her from us a happy chance put me in possession of a dog, the most affectionate and lovable of Skye terriers.

I named him Carry.

That dog, his qualities and virtues, and especially his musical gifts, deserve more than a passing mention; but, trusting that he, like every dog, will have his day, I will here only transcribe a letter of his that he wrote with the assistance of his friend, Arthur Sullivan, who, attracted perhaps by the gifts above named, had kindly taken charge of him during my temporary absence on the Continent. Poor dog! He is dead now; so that there can be no indiscretion in publishing his bark and its translation. The former is best given in its original setting. The latter, purporting to be a "Translation of the foregoing by A. S.," runs as follows:—

"My dear and esteemed Master,—My kind friend, Mr. Sullivan, who pretends to be as fond of me as you are, has taken me away from the enjoyment of a delicious mutton bone, in order to answer your letter; and as I cannot find a pen to suit me well, he is writing whilst I dictate.

I was very low-spirited the other day after leaving you, and appeared to feel the parting very much, but it soon wore off under the influence of biscuit, bones, and kindness; indeed, I must do Sully and his family the justice to say that they try to do the utmost to make me happy and comfortable, although they don't always succeed, for sometimes I appear dissatisfied (hoping, *entre-nous*, by that means to get more out of them).

"I have several idiosyncrasies and failings, of which my master (*pro tem.*) is trying to correct me, but finds it rather hard work, for I am not so easily brought out of them. I have a will of my own, but Sully says: 'Train up a dog in the way it should go, and he will not depart, &c., &c.'—and Sully is right.

"Don't you think it is a bad plan to wash me with soap? I think it deters me from licking my skin, and consequently from having those ideas of cleanliness engendered within me which are so necessary to every well-bred dog moving in good society!

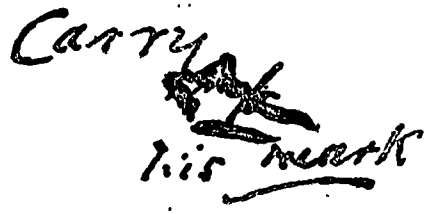
"I want to get back to my bone, but Sully says I must first deliver a message from him. You are to give his love to your dear parents

(in which I heartily join), and tell them how grieved he was that he did not see them to wish them 'God speed' before they left England, and how it hurt him to think that a long, long time would perhaps elapse before he should see them again.

"And now, my dear master, I must say 'Good-bye.' Much love in few words, in which Sully joins me.

"Believe me, ever your

"Attached and faithful dog,



"F. MOSCHELES, Esq."

And now I come to du Maurier's last letter—the best, as I am sure every right-minded person will admit. I have kept it "pour la bonne bouche" (excuse my quoting French. "Will me not of it," as our neighbours say; there are unassailable precedents for such quoting, you know—or ought to know). The letter in question speaks of an event so momentous, that of

all events it is the one most worthy to "be marked with a white, white stone"; and marked it was, if not with a stone, with satins and laces and a veil and white orange blossoms.

"Come and be introduced to the future Mrs. Kicky," it said. "She intends to celebrate her

21st birthday by a small dance. There will be friends and pretty girls, 'en veux tu, en violà.' So rek-lect, olf'lah, Tuesday, at half-past seven."

The drawing shows how I was introduced, and how graciously I was received.

The letter needs a word of explanation, as it

speaks of the "future Mrs. 'Kicky,'" and I have not yet mentioned that Kicky was but another name for du Maurier. He got it at an early period of his life. Just as any other baby less favoured by "Dame Fortune the witch" would have done, he gave himself his nickname. He picked it up in Brussels when he was two years old, and under the care of Flemish servants. They called him "Mannekin" (little man), and

that he converted into "Kicky." I append one of the numerous varieties of his signature.

The Rag, Tag, and Bobtail had its day, and was shelved soon after we bid adieu to Bohemia; but the Kicky survived and flourished, and to-day not only his old chums, but those nearest and dearest to him, feel that they could not do without that particular appellation, associated as it is with a thousand and one happy memories.

And having arrived at that busiest of stations, the Matrimonial Junction, where the converted bachelor alights and changes for Better or for Worse, this chapter fitly comes to a close, meant as it was only to sketch some of the pleasant recollections that I, in common with so many of his friends, have of du Maurier's bachelor days.

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